

Wash

★ December

The American Mercury



Ten Forgotten Men Channing Pollock

The Nation and New Republic:

Our "Liberal" Weeklies Harold Lord Varney

Madame La Secretary Perkins Helen R. Whitely

On Facing the Next War John W. Thomason, Jr.

A New Dose of British Propaganda A. J. Nock

Hero or Hack?

I. Semper Fit H. L. Mencken

II. Joseph Taylor Paul R. Grabel

Death from the Sky Paul B. Sears

The Good Life in Elena Smirnova

Our Enemy, the Cat Alan Devoe

The Old-Time Religion Kenneth Campbell

Hang-Over. A Story Paul Chalker

Waving a Bloody Japanese Shirt Editorial

THE SOCIAL-SECURITY HOAX

the last words written

by Ogden L. Mills

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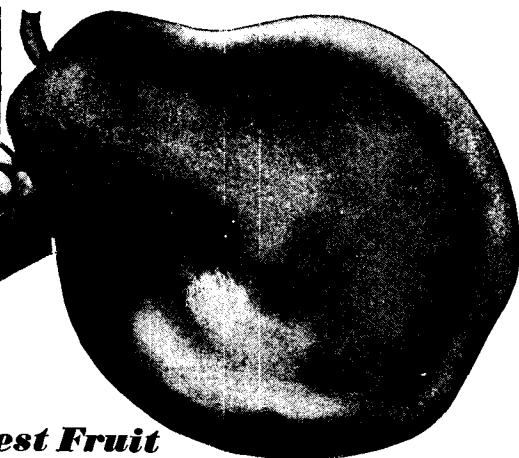
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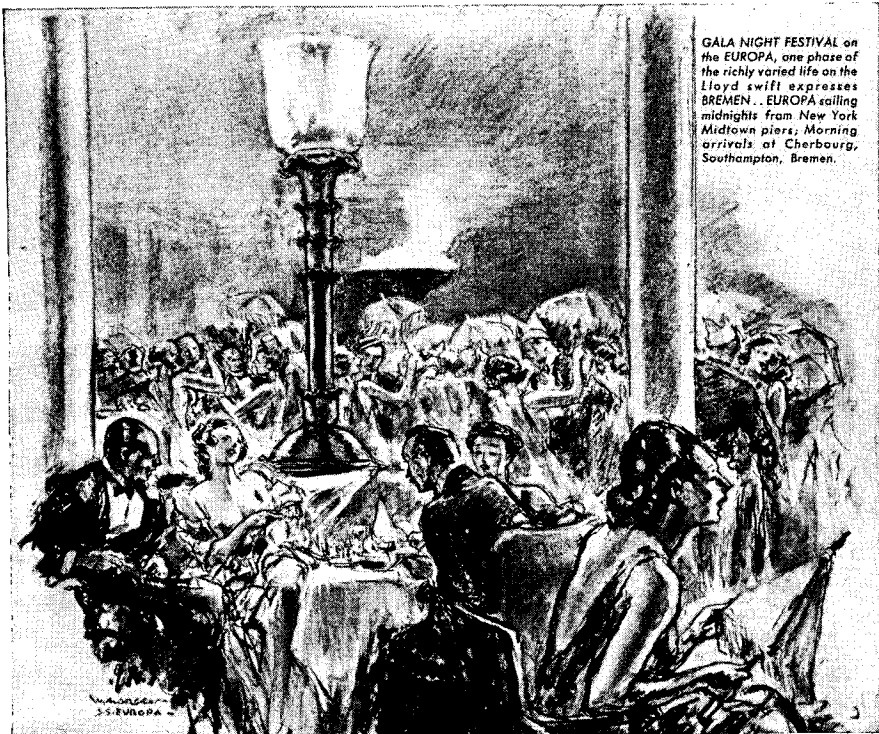
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VOLUME
XLII

TABLE OF CONTENTS

NUMBER
168

December

Paul Palmer, *Editor*

1937

The Social-Security Hoax.....	Ogden L. Mills	385
Further Notes on the Act.....	The Editors	390
Ten Forgotten Men.....	Channing Pollock	394
The Good Life in Moscow.....	Elena Smirnova	406
Madame La Secretary Perkins.....	Helen R. Whitely	416
The Old-Time Religion.....	Kenneth Campbell	427
Hero or Hack?		
I. Semper Fidelis.....	H. L. Mencken	436
II. Joseph Taylor Robinson.....	Paul R. Grabel	439
Death From the Soil.....	Paul B. Sears	440
Our Enemy, the Cat.....	Alan Devoe	448
Our "Liberal" Weeklies.....	Harold Lord Varney	452
Hang-Over. <i>A Story</i>	Paul Chalker	466
Editorial		
Waving a Bloody Japanese Shirt.....	The Editors	475
Americana.....		479
The State of the Union		
A New Dose of British Propaganda.....	Albert Jay Nock	482
Poetry		
I. Child on the Beach.....	Sara Henderson Hay	487
II. Incident in the Green Pastures.....	Marguerite Steedman	487
III. Boston Boy.....	Witter Bynner	488
IV. Toward Defeat.....	V. James Chrasta	489
The Library		
On Facing the Next War.....	John W. Thomason, Jr.	490
The Open Forum.....		496
Index to Volume XLII.....		511
The Check List.....		viii
The Contributors.....		xxvi
Recorded Music.....	Irving Kolodin	xxviii

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When and How did such words and terms as these originate?

O. K.	booze	palooka	chicken (girl)	plastered	to frisk (search)
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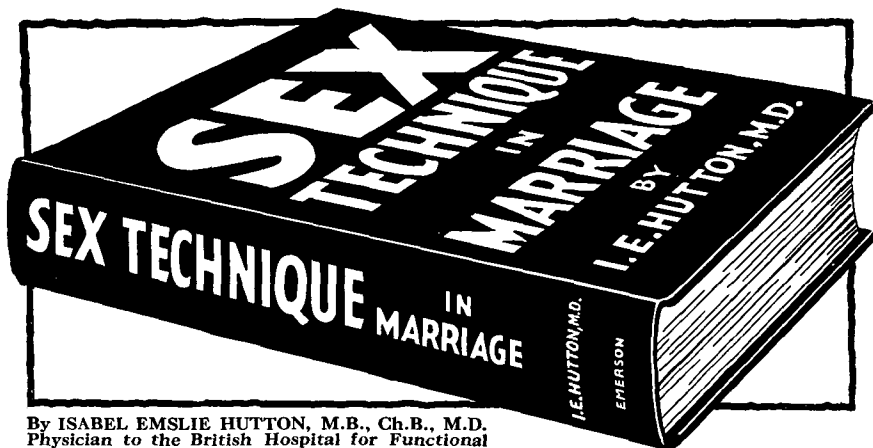
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(Continued on page x)



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(Continued from page viii)

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(Continued on page xii)

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(Continued from page x)

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(Continued in back adv't section, p. xviii)

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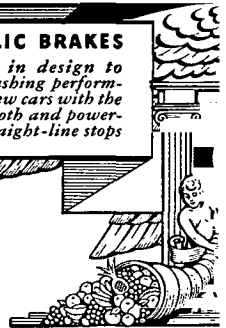
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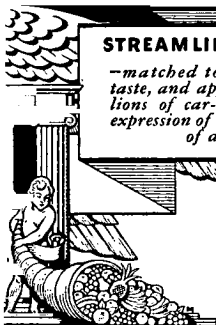
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The American MERCURY

THE SOCIAL-SECURITY HOAX

BY OGDEN L. MILLS

The following were the last words written by Ogden Mills, before his universally-regretted death. THE MERCURY had asked Mr. Mills to give its readers his considered opinion on the Social Security Act. It was — and is — the feeling of this magazine that the authoritative observations of the former Secretary of the Treasury would expose one of the more devious pieces of financial chicanery which the New Deal Administration is currently perpetrating.

OVER twenty years ago, as a member of the New York State Senate, I introduced a resolution providing for an investigation of the problem of social-security insurance. Nothing came of it. The time was not ripe. Since then, however, the American people have decided that they want, among other social measures, some effective system that will afford protection to those who, in their old age, are unable to provide

for themselves. The old-age-insurance plan of the federal Social Security Act is the Roosevelt Administration's response to this demand.

This law manifests the benevolent purposes of the Administration. But it also reveals the confusion of ideas, the slipshod methods, and the concealed aims which have characterized so many of the Administration's attempts to carry out its benevolent purposes. Not only

is the Act itself gravely defective, but the uses to which it is being put suggest that an ulterior purpose, wholly unconnected with social security, may well be responsible for its major weakness. That ulterior purpose is the perpetuation of the New Deal Administration through the financing of government deficits with money paid by poor people into a non-existent Reserve Fund.

The worker has been led to believe that his payments to this so-called Reserve Fund are used to create an investment and to build up a genuine reserve against future liabilities, as in the case of private insurance companies. But, the Old-Age Reserve Account is actually neither an investment nor a reserve. For it cannot be treated as something separate and apart from the Government.

Obviously, there are just two parties to the insurance plan: contributors and annuitants on the one hand; the Government on the other. The Government collects the payroll-taxes, and in return undertakes to pay an annuity at some future date. When, therefore, the Government spends for current expenditures all that it collects in payroll-taxes, and places its own obligations in the Old-Age Reserve Account, it has not acquired

an asset. It has created a definite liability.

Nor is the Reserve a true reserve in the sense of added security. No new wealth comes into being. The productive assets of the nation are not increased as is the case when individuals save and invest their savings directly or through the medium of savings banks or insurance companies. These savings for the most part are productively invested. New wealth is created. And this new wealth may be expected to help provide the income with which to meet the future claims established by the individual savers. In direct contrast, our so-called governmental Old-Age Reserve creates no wealth. It adds nothing to the nation's ability to pay future annuities. When the payroll taxes have been dissipated in current expenditures, there is nothing to show for them except a book entry.

But it is said that the Fund will at least earn interest, will lighten the extraordinarily heavy burden placed on future generations. Just one more fiction. By 1980, for instance, the benefits then being paid will be covered to the extent of sixty per cent by payroll-taxes, and of forty per cent by interest. The interest, however, is interest on Government obligations, and must

be financed through general taxation. What does this mean? It means that that particular generation will be paying for old-age benefits in part through payroll-taxes and in part through general taxation. Whatever benefits it receives, it will pay for in full. Its burden will in no way have been lightened by the Reserve Fund. Indeed, the Administration's technical advisers saw no necessity for creating anything more than a moderate reserve. Appearing before the Senate and House Committees, the Security Board's own actuary, Mr. W. H. Williamson, testified:

Essentially, actuarial opinion inclines to the belief that no reserves are particularly important to a government plan . . . it seems to me safer and sounder to have no reserves than it does to have full reserves.

If, then, the Old-Age Reserve Account is neither an investment nor an actual reserve; if it is not even a useful method for easing the future load; and if, according to the best actuarial opinion, it is unnecessary, what is it and why was it established?

The answer is perfectly simple. The Reserve is a clever scheme which enables the present Administration to finance current expenditures with wage- and payroll-taxes, while leading the gullible

wage-earners of this country to believe that they are acquiring additional security.

With no benefits paid until 1942, this financial chicanery will enable the Government by that time to put its hand on \$3,000,000,000 without any offsetting cash outgo — all of which would be impossible without this fictitious Reserve. For twenty years thereafter taxes will each year exceed benefit payments; and by 1980 the Reserve Fund *will have reached the staggering total of forty-seven billion dollars.*

Professor Edwin E. Witte, executive director of the Economic Security Committee which drafted the Act, let the cat out of the bag in a recent essay:

The theory underlying the tax rates now imposed [under the old-age plan] is that excess collections will in the immediate future, while there is still a large federal deficit, reduce the amount which has to be borrowed from outsiders.

And Secretary Morgenthau himself, on the occasion of the favorable rulings of the Supreme Court declaring the Social Security Act constitutional, made the following significant admission: "The decisions," he said, in the careless enthusiasm of the moment, "remove a large budget uncertainty and spell a difference in Treasury fi-

nancing during the next fiscal year of an estimated billion dollars."

Nothing could be clearer than that.

II

Now, in order that there may be no question as to what is being done with the payroll-taxes imposed upon wage-earners, let us take a look at the budget for this fiscal year. The latest estimate of the amount of old-age-insurance taxes to be collected during the fiscal year 1938 is \$621,800,000. The funds so collected are covered into the Treasury as internal-revenue taxes. They are now being invested on a monthly basis in three-percent special Treasury obligations, which are placed in the Old-Age Reserve Account. When the Treasury makes these investments, the proceeds are treated as public-debt receipts, and are covered back into the General Fund of the Treasury as such in the same manner as the proceeds from public-debt obligations sold in the market. To state it simply: through a series of book entries, the Treasury goes through the motion of taking the funds collected in the form of taxes on wages out of the General Fund, of investing them in its own obligations, and of then covering them back

into the General Fund of the Treasury as public-debt receipts, automatically making them available for any kind of current expenditures authorized by law. When the year is over, there will be a small pile of I.O.U.'s in a box neatly labeled, "Old-Age Reserve Account". And over \$600,000,000 in old-age taxes will have been used to finance this year's excess of expenditures. Thus, the contributions of the workingman are used to relieve the cash needs of the Treasury, and so perpetuate the power of the New Deal. These contributions are finally, remember, to reach the preposterous sum of forty-seven billion dollars.

In the same way, unless I am greatly mistaken, these payroll-taxes are also intended to play a part in quieting the growing concern over a chronically-unbalanced budget. As the social security move is now inextricably involved in the budget, as I have shown, it may be well to review briefly the facts about the latter.

When the New Deal began to incur its monumental deficits, the public was comforted with the "cyclical" theory of public finance. Deficits in depression were to be matched by surpluses in good times. Well, the good times came, and the deficit last year, though not

as large as in prior years, was still large enough to stagger most governments. So the "cyclical" theory suddenly vanished from the newspapers.

Then we were told that, because of offsetting recoverable assets, no concern need be felt over the mounting debt. But, as it became apparent that these assets were being dissipated as fast as they could be liquidated, this contention was dropped.

And now it is being insistently suggested that a budget may be balanced from a layman's, rather than a technical, point of view. The implication is that the so-called layman's balance should satisfy all common-sense requirements, and that the continued inability of the Government to meet its obligations need occasion no alarm. This is the latest and one of the most insidiously-dangerous New Deal fictions. Both from a common-sense and a technical standpoint, the budget is balanced when, and only when, the Government has adequate current revenue — exclusive of trust receipts — to meet *all* current obligations. How the Administration now defines a layman's balance, I do not know. But I am confident that the next step will be to suggest that a common-sense balance has been

reached when total cash receipts — including trust receipts — balance total cash outgo.

What does this mean?

It means that the sinking-fund law becomes a dead letter. As a matter of fact, in plain violation of the statute and of what Vice-President Garner, then a member of Congress, termed, "a contract made with the bondholder by Congress", the Administration has already suspended the operation of the sinking fund. By the end of this fiscal year, sinking-fund debt-retirements will be \$1,200,000,000 in arrears.

In the second place, this so-called layman's balance means that capital assets which should be applied to debt reduction are being currently dissipated.

It means that trust funds are being applied to ordinary expenditures.

It means that future liabilities are piling up without any increased ability to meet them, or any reduction of the debt in the hands of the public.

It means an indefinite postponing of an honestly-balanced budget, while the people are lulled into a false sense of security. And this means, in turn, that pensioners will be paid their annuities in dollars of much less purchasing power than those they contributed in taxes.

And, finally, it means that through the creation of a fictitious Old-Age Reserve, without any benefit to the contributors until 1942, over \$3,000,000,000 will have been paid in payroll taxes, not one penny of which need have been paid until benefits began had we adopted a legitimate pay-as-you-go program.

III

The facts speak for themselves. There is no occasion to paint this lily. But I cannot refrain from observing that had any other Administration been guilty of such practices as I have described, the New Dealers would have exhausted their ample vocabulary of epithets in pillorying men willing to perpetrate such a hoax.

As I view the New Deal program as a whole, two main purposes

stand out: first, a determination to extend and perpetuate the power of this Administration; and, second, a perfectly sincere desire to bring to the people a better life. The first objective is pursued with ingenuity, skill, singleness of purpose, and unswerving tenacity. The attainment of the second objective is frustrated by bad economics, confusion of ideas, sloppy administration, and—above all—by constant subordination to the first and dominating purpose.

The Old-Age Insurance Law is just another example of this inner conflict. The Administration's purpose was good—but its own need for survival had first to be provided for. Unfortunately for American wage-earners, this provision demanded wage-deductions amounting to billions of hard-earned dollars.

FURTHER NOTES ON THE ACT

BY THE EDITORS

THE preceding able article from the pen of the late Ogden Mills has made clear the intentions of the New Deal Administration in regard to the Social Security Act's Reserve Fund. That intention is, bluntly, to utilize forty-seven bil-

lion dollars of the American workingman's money as a gigantic slush fund for the perpetuation of Dr. Roosevelt's dictatorial régime. While an appreciation of that salient fact is of paramount importance to the public, there are sev-

eral other aspects of the Act which also require close examination. For, notwithstanding the consecrated twaddle at present emanating from Washington, the contributory insurance scheme itself is a hoax on every principle of sound social-security legislation. Its publicized purpose is to enable the wage-earner to retire on an annuity in respectable fashion: but what is to be said about the undeniable fact that the main burden of taxation is placed on this same workingman?

Examining the plan in detail, we find that it is financed by a payroll-tax on employers and a wage-tax on workers, the level of each eventually rising to three per cent. Now it requires a soaring mind to differentiate between a payroll-tax and a sales-tax. To everyone but the prodigies in Washington, it is plainly evident that a payroll-tax merely raises the cost of production, and as such, is passed on to the consumer — *i.e.*, the workingman — in the form of higher prices. For example, prior to January of this year, when the old-age payroll-tax went into effect, dozens of trade associations recognized the necessity of raising prices. As reported in the December issue of the *Butchers' Advocate and Food Merchant*, the Associated Food Dealers, Inc., were told by their attorney that the

payroll-tax "... like the sales-tax, should be passed on to the consumer". The current price of food reflects this increase. The November issue of the *Western Construction News* reported the need for quoting higher prices on building estimates because of payroll-taxes. These higher prices are now being reflected in increased rents. The December *National Clothier* noted higher quotations for clothing because of payroll-taxes. *Cram's Report* (October 10, 1936) warned its readers: "Because of increased costs under the Social Security Act, producers (of shoes) are expected to raise prices." And so on, from one trade journal to another.

Everyone but the breast-beaters in Washington seems to know that the payroll-tax is a sales-tax, and as such is handed on to the consumer. And, since employees and their families constitute the greatest bulk of consumers, it is obvious that they will pay indirectly for most of the payroll-tax — over and above, of course, the levy on their wages which they will pay directly. Payroll-taxes automatically become part of the cost of production. It is useless to imagine that the employer will deduct them from his profits, since the taxes must be paid before any profits are evident — in fact, they must be paid

regardless of whether the employer derives any profit at all. Hence, whether the wage-earner meets the tax indirectly through higher prices, or by having his pay cut or his hours lengthened, he will carry the burden over and above the impost on his wages, which is deducted by the employer for the government. And all this has come to pass despite the fact that it was the financial inability of the wage-earner to provide security for himself which prompted Dr. Roosevelt's compassionate Administration to draft such legislation.

In return for these direct and indirect payments which the worker will tender to the government, he is to receive an annuity at the age of 65. That is, in 1942, the federal government will begin to grant retirement payments to eligible employees. All persons who come under the Act — domestic and agricultural workers are the main exemptions — are eligible for annuities at 65, provided, however, that the age of 65 does not arrive before 1942. If it does, then the person is given a lump sum immediately, but no annuity. Now it is patent to anyone who has ever tried to purchase an annuity from an insurance company that the sums to be granted by the government within the next twenty years will be amaz-

ingly large. The minimum annuity is \$10 per month and the theoretic maximum, \$85. Employees retiring within the next generation will thus receive annuities far greater than any insurance company can grant for the same amount of money — *i.e.*, the combined payments of employer and employee.

This is certainly a most singular phenomenon, and one might be led to believe that the government plan, after all, is a genuine instrument of social-insurance, inasmuch as it proposes to pay to retired employees large annuities in spite of the fact that the recipient could not afford and did not pay sufficiently for the granted benefit. There is, however, a serious catch to the bargain. The elderly workers are given larger annuities than those to which they are entitled, so that they may retire with some minimum of decency; but this philanthropy on the part of the New Deal is occasioned by the fact that it is the younger worker who is overtaxed anywhere from five- to forty-per-cent of his annuity and who thereby pays for the larger figure granted to the older worker.

The abbreviated table at the bottom of page 393 tells the story. The government annuities are compared with the annuities which private insurance companies would

grant for the same amount of money. In other words, the private annuities are used as a yardstick. As is made evident in the table, the older workers who are fifty years of age today will receive much more than they are entitled to, while almost all the younger workers will receive less. The enlarged annuities to be received by the former are made possible by taking away some of the money which had been paid in by, and which would eventually go to, the younger workers.

The interesting point about this plan is that it redistributes the wealth of these wage-earners without redistributing anyone else's money. The program provides that poor young Peter shall give part of his income to impoverished old Paul, notwithstanding the fact that

Peter can scarcely afford to give anything at all.

The wage-earners, of course, are not told this story. And the general public has had no opportunity thus far to witness the operation of the old-age retirement plan. When the hollowness and humbuggery of the whole scheme become evident, however, it will be found that there is no essential difference between the preachings of Dr. Townsend and the charlatanism of Dr. Roosevelt — except that the latter knows exactly what he is doing and, furthermore, is getting away with it. Whether the American workingman will awaken to this chicanery is difficult to foretell; but if he does not, there is no doubt that he will get old-age security where he least deserves it — right in the neck.

MONTHLY RETIREMENT ANNUITY SCHEDULE

<i>Aver. Monthly Wage</i>	50 YEARS OF AGE TODAY		20 YEARS OF AGE TODAY	
	<i>Gov't Annuity at 65</i>	<i>Approx. Priv. Annuity at 65</i>	<i>Gov't Annuity at 65</i>	<i>Approx. Priv. Annuity at 65</i>
\$ 50.00	\$20.00	\$ 5.00	\$35.00	\$ 30.00
100.00	27.50	9.00	53.75	56.00
150.00	35.00	12.00	65.00	80.00
200.00	42.50	17.00	76.25	100.00
250.00	50.00	20.00	85.00	125.00

TEN FORGOTTEN MEN

BY CHANNING POLLOCK

SERVIVUS TULLIUS, who lived in the sixth century before Christ, and claimed to be a son of the god Vulcan, divided the citizens of Rome into five classes for purposes of taxation, with a sixth division too destitute to bear any share of the cost of government. Our own son of the gods, Franklin the First, has gone Servivus several better by abolishing all classes, except those at the top and bottom, the very rich and the very poor, the Economic Royalists and the Underprivileged. The rest of us have been dropped into the limbo of Forgotten Men. Franklin's first class, like Servivus' first five, exists for purposes of taxation; his second and last class for purposes of oratory and perpetuation of the dynasty.

In the collected messages, papers, pronouncements, bedtime stories, syndicated articles, and radio broadcasts of the Roosevelts, it would be difficult to find any suggestion that a generous—an involuntarily generous—proportion of America still gets up when the alarm clock goes off; takes a walk,

or a subway, or a bus to business; works a ten-hour day without restraint or commiseration of the labor unions; pays its bills, plays its bridge, and enjoys as much comfort as is possible to a forgotten body with its head on the block, waiting for the axe to fall.

The Rooseveltian philosophy takes no cognizance of these persons; in today's United States they are extinct as the bathing skirt. Realizing this, not long ago I sallied forth in search of cross-sections of what used to be the backbone of America. Had the middle class, who were neither exploiters nor exploited, faded out of existence, or only out of the consciousness at both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue? A few of the resultant discoveries of my exploration trip are pinned to these pages, without fear or favor, extenuation or malice: sketches true and accurate in everything except what might lead to identification. In free America, under Franklin I, the opposition's unknown soldiers have developed a passion for remaining that way.

Case One

This takes us back briefly to the dawn of Remade America. Its importance now lies in the fact that that ancient bird, the Blue Eagle, with which it deals, was, in a sense, progenitor of the whole flock of social-experiment chickens which have come home to roost. The Eagle is dead, but in various guises its soul goes marching on.

James Martin went to war in 1917. Before that, he had done well with a repair shop and garage, where my one-lunged, reconditioned Cadillac spent its winters. When Martin came back, he had lost an arm, and most of his customers. He struggled along, however, and was on the road to recovery when the Depression intervened. That was Hoover's fault, of course, so James voted for Roosevelt and the More Abundant Life. Yet when Autumn came, he advised me to choose some other place for dead storage. "We're down to our last dime," he said. "I may not be here when you get back in the Spring."

He was, though; thinner, and with more gray in his hair. "Well," he exulted, "we pulled through all right. I laid off two men, and did their work myself. Hard-sledding for all of us, but the shop just couldn't earn wages for eleven

men. I figured it was better to drop a couple o' fellows temporarily than to shut up and throw the whole bunch out o' work. We're breaking even now, and I'll put those two back as soon as happy days are here again."

This was such obvious common sense that I was astonished, a few weeks later, at finding the original eleven, and three more, on the floor of Martin's Garage. I say "on the floor" rather than "on the job", because there didn't begin to be jobs for fourteen. The manufactory of happy days had started functioning in Washington, NRA had emerged, and a bulletin at the post office listed the local industrialists who had agreed to hire more help. Martin's name, like Abou Ben's, led all the rest.

"Yes," he grinned wryly, replying to my amazed inquiry, "that list is the answer, all right. Maybe God and the President knows how I'm going to pay fourteen men; I don't. But what could I do?"

"Keep going with the men you *could* pay," I suggested.

"Oh, yeah?" Martin jeered. "Well, Griswold's Clothing Store tried that, and they're as shut as a clam at low tide. You don't know the feeling that's been stirred up in this town. The President's trying to put us all back to work, and

we're standing behind him four-square. Anybody that didn't stick his name on that list was a slacker, and treated like slackers was after I went to France. Charlie Griswold says people came into his place, and asked why his name wasn't in front of the post office, and when he told 'em, they even *brought back* stuff they'd bought. After that, one day Charlie only took in three dollars. I been building my business all my life, and so's Charlie, but both of us are licked now, and if I got to shut up I'd rather do it standing well in the town than with everybody thinking I won't do my bit."

James went back to work, dangling the empty sleeve that testified to an earlier bit-doing. Six weeks later, Martin's Garage was "For Rent". The two temporary lay-offs would have saved him, but five additions to the payroll proved too much for a man at the end of his credit. When last heard of, all five were on Relief, and, also, seven of the nine Martin might have kept going. Martin now works in a gasoline station on Route 25.

Case Two

This brings us a little bit nearer the approaching millennium. His name — for purposes of anonymity — is Frank Withers. Like Case

One, his profession is automobiles; he drives a taxi. Early in the present reign, I encountered him before a neighboring cinema palace. In those golden days, part of every movie program for the rural trade dealt with the New Deal's omniscience and benevolence.

"See the picture?" Frank asked. "Yes."

"How'd you like a plate of ice cream?"

In Frank's taxi, and my car, we drove to the Paradise Refreshment Parlor. Seated there, Frank said: "You've known me more'n twenty years."

"Nearer thirty."

"In all that time, did you ever hear of my missin' a train? No, nor nobody else did. The last one gets in here at 1:56 in the mornin', and the first one leaves at 5:36. I'm there for 'em both, in case there might be a quarter in it. Exceptin' my uniform, I never owned two suits o' clothes at one time in my life. My wife does the cookin' and washin'. We always wanted to be safe in our old age. I'm sixty-one now, and we saved \$5400. We put it in a second mortgage on Henry Parsons' Peach and Poultry Farm. Know Henry?"

"Very well."

"Livin' high these days, he is."

"Yes? What on?"

"On my \$5400," the taxi-driver answered. "And, before that, on what come from his first mortgage. The bank give him \$7000 to buy more chickens and machinery. Henry used part of it that way, too. That's what made me think the second mortgage was all right. Then, the gover'ment began talkin' about the poor, downtrodden farmer, and how he ought to be helped. Henry figured you could get money for askin', I guess. Anyway, Henry traded in his old Ford for a big Packard him and his wife drives. He got a station wagon, and a runabout for the kids, and a \$300 radio — all on the instalment plan. He's got a cook, and a second-girl, too, and the money's about gone now, so my mortgage ain't worth the paper it's written on."

"No," I admitted. "The farm's run down a good deal. Right now, I doubt that it would bring enough to satisfy the *first* mortgage."

"That's all right," Frank declared. "Ma *said* I was a fool to listen to Henry, but I got my taxi and my health. I don't mind startin' over again, only —"

He gripped the marble-topped table with both gnarled hands, and leaned forward until his face almost touched mine.

"Only you saw that picture to-

night, and you know, like I do, that it was framed up in Washington. You saw what a low dog it made of the feller that foreclosed his mortgage, and you heard how everybody in the audience hissed him. Okay! I got a mortgage on Henry Parsons' farm. I made the money by workin' a'most from dawn to dawn, and my wife saved it by doin' the cookin' and washin'. Henry spent it on hirin' cooks and buyin' automobiles, and I want you to tell me how that makes him a great guy, and why me and that other feller is low dogs because we want our money back."

"I don't know, Frank," I answered. "Why don't you ask the President?"

Case Three

He was a taxi-driver, too. Year before last, he drove me from Albany to Schenectady. During the whole journey, he broke his silence only once — when we encountered a gang of PWA "workers" loafing along the highway. You knew they were "workers" because the sign said so, but the only labor visibly being accomplished was that of a man who sauntered across the road with a shovel containing two small pieces of asphalt. My Jehu applied his emergency brake. "Look at 'em!" he exclaimed. "I drive this

bus ten hours a day, in all weather, for two dollars and a half a week more than they get for playing ping-pong. And I voted them into the job!"

Case Four

Marguerite and her husband own a small beauty parlor in New York City. Many of their clients are employed, and unable to "take treatments" until six in the evening. Marguerite and her husband seldom leave their establishment before ten. It was long after ten, at the end of a hot day, that I called there for my daughter.

The proprietors were alone in the shop—two tired, frayed little people. "What's it all about?" Marguerite asked me. "We're working just to pay taxes. 'Dolph and I have his brother to support, and his brother's family, and I have my mother and sister. When we've done that, we give the rest to the gover'ment. We couldn't even take a week's vacation this year; we hadn't the money."

Wearily, she crossed the room and lifted from her desk a bundle of envelopes.

"Six of 'em," she said. "They all came today, and they all tell us to fork out or go to jail. *This* is our income tax. Sure, we have an income, and it looks pretty good on

paper—that is, what the gover'ment calls income and takes its share of, looks pretty good. *Our* share shrinks a lot after we've handed out to 'Dolph's brother, and my mother and sister, but the gover'ment should worry! They won't even let 'Dolph subtract the \$400 a year allowed for dependents, because they say his brother is able to work. How's a man able to work when he can't get a job? If 'Dolph didn't support that family, they'd be on Relief, with the gover'ment paying all of it, but so long as *we* pay it, they don't care. And if there's no income next year, that's our business, too. We might've tidied over with what we'd saved on the good years, but the gover'ment got that. The income tax man told 'Dolph we're in partnership with the gover'ment. Gee, I'd like to be in a partnership where I took my share of the good years, and left the other fellow to pull through the bad ones!

"*This* envelope's Social Security. The employer pays one per cent, but, as 'Dolph and I are both employers, we pay two. Then there's the Unemployment Tax, to take care of the idle. 'Dolph says there were always about four million unemployed, even at the peak of prosperity—gen'rally people that didn't want to work—but it

wasn't until Roosevelt came along that anybody thought *we* ought to take care of 'em. Most of us are doing our bit of that without Roosevelt. We pay a Profits Tax, too. *That* makes us look good on paper, but I'd hate to tell you how much of it's left after we've settled for rent and wages and supplies and equipment and taxes. We pay a sales tax on every hairpin we use — not to mention the food we eat, and the clothes we wear, and the little things we sell. Sure, we can pass that on to the consumer, but try it in this neighborhood. We pay the employees' share of old-age insurance, too. They're not interested in what happens to 'em when they're sixty. They've only got a one-in-ten chance of living that long, they say; why should they cough up part of their salary for the next forty years to provide for somebody they don't know after they're dead? Or to take care of a lot of bum politicians?

"Now, they're talking about another tax for health insurance. When that comes, we're shutting up shop. 'Dolph and me paid the gover'ment over \$1000 this year. I got to stand on my feet a good many hours, and do a whole lot of 'sets' for every hundred of that. 'Dolph and me could've got a nice vacation for one-fifth of it. But

Roosevelt's a friend of the poor man. Yeah, but only if he's poor enough; only if he isn't worth anything to anybody, and can't work, or won't. People like 'Dolph and me, we pay the bill.

"Well, let's go home. I've got to start all over again at eight o'clock tomorrow morning, and 'Dolph's got to see if he can borrow the money for these taxes."

Cases Five and Six

On an American liner, in the Pacific Ocean, William, the steward, was midway in the tidying of our cabin. Brush in hand, he stopped and listened to someone forward who was striking four bells. "Two o'clock," William said. "I'd like to finish this room, but I got to get my beauty rest."

"Would you mind taking this tray with you?" my wife asked.

"Sorry," William replied, "I'd only get in trouble with the union. It's the baloney, of course. Most of the crowd on this ship are old-timers; decent fellows that would like to do their own job in their own way. Not one of us has got anything against the company; the company's been good to us, but we went on strike just the same — we did, or got our faces mused up a bit. I'd more than half paid for my home, up near Seattle, when the

strike came. I had to let it go, then. What was the good trying to hold on, with four mouths to feed, and not a dime coming in?"

There was a step in the hall.

"One of the spies," William said. "I'd better go now. It wouldn't do for us to be caught working outside of union hours."

George, the Greek table steward, was equally sore on the strike. "I'm an American," he told us proudly. "But my mother, she lives in Greece. She's an old woman; I was going over to see her once more before she died. I had the money saved, too, and the company was going to give me my passage free. Then the strike came. Sure, we won it, and we're getting \$10 a month more pay now. It'll take nearly eight years for that \$10 a month to put back what I had when the strike started. Six months without work, with your mother to take care of—even in Greece—and a wife and kids here can make an awful hole in a nest-egg. And there don't seem much hope that we'll get that extra ten more'n a few months before there'll be another strike. It's on the way; *you* know that. The union leaders say the gover'ment's back of us, and we can get anything we ask for. Me and most of my mates is asking just one thing—to be let alone, to

be let do our work, and get our wages. It's swell to be sittin' in Washington, or on a yacht somebody else pays for, telling the world you're the pal of the working man. Likely enough, it gets you elected again. But what does it get us? I had \$900 saved. I'd 'a' been with my mother now, if Labor hadn't so many friends ridin' around in limousines, and droppin' in for tea at the White House."

Case Seven

Dr. Robinson believes in the More Abundant Life. "And," he declares, "the New Deal has brought it to my part of the South. Just before the last Presidential election, a lot of our rural shopkeepers and responsible citizens got a letter from Washington asking them if they knew any deserving persons in need and too proud to ask for government aid. If so, would the responsible citizens send in the names? The responsible citizens did—on an agreement to split with the deserving persons. If you could dig up enough ill-nourished and ill-housed, the return was magnificent. I know responsible citizens who were grossing \$200 a week for a while. Of course, that ended soon after election, but it was a good game while it lasted, and when

folks in my State mention God and Roosevelt, believe me it's not God that comes first!"

Case Eight

Alfred Dean was my secretary in 1922. He is sales manager for a small novelty house now, and earns \$1800 a year.

"It's no good, though," he told me. "It's no good for any of us. There are a hundred chaps of my kind living in our little town, and millions of us in America—far more of us than the combined enrollment of both labor unions. We're clean, decent, reasonably honest, and fairly well educated. We pay our bills, and our taxes, and try to send our children to college, or high-school, anyway. A lot of us spent most of our lives earning our own schooling and training for our jobs, but there isn't one in the crowd who gets the wages of a truck-driver.

"My house needs a couple of coats of paint, but the painters are striking for \$1.75 an hour, which means \$14 for an eight-hour day. One painter, one day, with the cost of the paint that had to pay increased labor charges, would take most of my week's salary. Meat's up and grain's up, partly because of what the government killed and plowed under, and now we're out

to peg the price of cotton, and a lot of other necessities. People of my kind have to dress well and keep up appearances. When we're ill, we have to pay for our medical care, and, ill or well, we pay income taxes, and sales taxes, and luxury taxes on our toothpaste. Out my way, the Public Works outfit has just built a swimming pool for the underprivileged. A few miles west, there are houses the government rents them at less than the interest on my mortgage. I've been waiting five years to hear somebody say something about, or propose doing something for, the fellow we used to call 'the backbone of the nation', but I guess this nation doesn't need a backbone any more."

Case Nine

John Laurie is proprietor of the Annie Laurie Nurseries. John began his career as a farm laborer at fifteen. Of old Scotch stock, he saved most of his wages, and, when he married at twenty-two, had put by enough to build a small greenhouse, and pay for a sign that advertised: "Cut Flowers. Expert Care of Gardens. Home-made Pies." John still has that sign, and is proud of it.

From 1897 to 1901, the Lauries cut their flowers, cared for gardens, and made pies without any assist-

ance. Then they took on a "hired man", and, when he "got consumption", used most of their sinking fund to pay for his care and his funeral. That man's son is now superintendent of the nurseries. He gets \$2500 a year. There is a foreman who is paid almost as much, and a dozen more-or-less skilled laborers at from four to six dollars an eight-hour day. Moreover, the Lauries have three trucks and two smaller wagons, each with a driver at the prevailing scale. Most of the "help" have been personal friends of the Lauries. John has tided them over bad times, and Annie has nursed their children and showed their wives how to make pies. Five years ago, there probably wasn't a man on the place who didn't call the boss "John".

A few months ago, John and Annie and I sat in the parlor of their trim little house and discussed the Personified Beneficence. "What's all this talk of security?" John asked. "What do they mean by it?"

"They mean that when you get old, the government'll take care of you."

"I don't want any government taking care of me," John said. "I can take care of myself, if I'm given half a chance. I've been secure all my life — secure of making a liv-

ing with these two hands, secure of keeping anything that was left over, secure in my home and my standing in the community.

"I'm a quiet, cautious, middle-of-the-way Scotsman, and I like knowing what's going to happen. If it's good, okay; if it's bad, I like feeling that I can overcome some of it. But now all the good comes from Washington, and the bad with it. Nobody knows which it's going to be, or how much, and nobody feels that he can do a darned thing to help or hinder. A smiling gentleman in the White House is making up his mind what he's going to do for us, and with us, and, if we vote right, maybe he'll tell us about it over the radio. I've worked hard, and saved hard, and done my part as a citizen, and I wouldn't bet a penny as to whether I die broke, or in jail, or on Relief, or running down the street, chased by a mob, with my shirt-tail hanging out.

"Five years ago, I was a respected man in this town. I'd a good business, and paid good wages to a good many of my fellow citizens, and that counted. It still counts, but not in my favor. I'm an Economic Royalist now, and a Prince of Privilege. Gosh, what privilege have I ever had, except the privilege of slaving like a nigger

and shelling out taxes? Most of my men have been with me for years; we were friends and workers together. Last month, a fellow I never saw before drove up in a swell car, and began talking to 'em. Wednesday, there was a meeting in my seed-house, and Thursday my foreman came in with two of my drivers and one of my other men to tell me the whole gang was organized, and I'd have to talk terms with the fellow I never saw before in my life. And if I didn't, he was going to complain about me to some Labor Board. I said I'd walk out first. And what do you suppose he said?"

"I've no idea."

"Well," Laurie continued, a trifle huskily, "he said that wouldn't hurt none. He said I was behind the times, anyway. 'Men like you ain't going to live on other men's labor much longer,' he said. 'The government's going to fix that. Another few years, and we'll take over this business and run it ourselves, and get what's coming to us.' I fired him, of course, but he'll have to come back, I guess. They tell me that's discriminating against a man on account of union activity, and the government won't stand for it."

"Of course that's all nonsense," I assured him. "That is, the talk

about taking over your business."

"Is it?" John asked. "I don't know. What *is* nonsense today, and what will be tomorrow? Who can tell? That's what I mean by 'security'. Maybe those fellows are going to be secure, and maybe not. Personally, I wouldn't give much for their chances without men like me. But, anyway, what happens to us? If anybody'd told me a man could talk like that to me, and I couldn't fire him, I'd've said they was crazy. If anybody'd told me I couldn't run this business by myself — that I ran by myself, with these two hands, and Annie's, until it got somewhere — without instructions from Washington, and young fellows from New York, and Labor Boards, I'd've said worse'n that. But where do we go from here? What's to prevent Washington doing anything it darn pleases? Thousands of people I never saw, and that never built up anything, are deciding what they're going to do with my life and my business and my savings, and not even letting me in on it.

"I don't want the kind of security you get by being in jail. Neither do you, and neither does anybody else that's worth a damn. All we want is to do an honest day's work for an honest dollar, and to know that it's going to be worth a dollar,

and to be able to guess what's ahead of us without reading the morning paper, or tuning in on the new God in Washington."

Case Ten

Thirty-four years ago, David Ling borrowed a few thousand dollars and started a small retail business in Pennsylvania. He had been a salesman — provident, hard-working, and ambitious. The shop prospered, and eventually David opened another. That was in 1926. For twenty-three years, David had paid himself a modest salary, and put everything else back into the concern. "I'm too busy to need much," he told me, "but before long I'll have an established business, and then I'll retire and travel."

The Ling stores were hard hit by the Depression. David cut only one salary: his own. In 1933, he reduced all wages ten per cent, and dropped himself off the payroll. "We've used up the sinking fund," he confided in me, "but as long as we break even we're all right. Roosevelt's doing things, and we should be out of the woods pretty soon."

By 1935, he wasn't so confident. "I'm beginning to worry," he told me, seated in the cheap little flat he'd taken when the pinch came. "Hard times didn't mean any-

thing. We've been through 'em before. We got into them in 1907, and out again, and on again, but then we weren't tied up in red tape, and bothered by bureaucrats who couldn't get a living any other way, and taxed out of existence to pay them. Then, I banked on my individual ability, and won. Now, we're all goosestepping to the same music. Last year, I couldn't give one of our girls a day off without getting permission from Washington. I spend all my time reading government regulations and writing government reports. We've one clerk now who does *nothing* but write reports and fill out tax forms. Every now and then, some bright young bureaucrat drops in to tell us what we can or can't do, or to go over our books. All these chaps have two things in common — they know more about the business than we do, and they're mighty sure I'm a crook.

"What really hamstring us, though, is the taxes. What's the good of business getting better when the government takes everything? Every kind of government — city, state, and national. I own the building our new store's in; it's mortgaged to the hilt now, but I own it, and I wish I could sell it for half the assessed value on which we pay taxes. And here's one of

life's little ironies: Roosevelt's telling our people they're underprivileged and underpaid, and, if I weren't an exploiter, they'd be getting more wages. The truth is the government's getting their wages. We could give 'em back that ten per cent, and still be way ahead, but for our taxes, and they could get on nicely without the ten per cent if everything they use hadn't gone up because of other people's taxes."

Last August, David celebrated his seventy-fourth birthday. "I always said I'd quit, and travel," he laughed. "That's out. In three years, our bureaucrats spent 206 million dollars on traveling, and I've got to pay my share of it."

The laugh ended.

"I'll tell you a peculiar thing," he continued. "Through that three years, our loss has been exactly our taxes. But for those, we'd break even, and might keep running indefinitely. My present salary is \$180 a month, minus my income tax. Our gross business last year was \$192,000, and our pay roll \$63,000. Overhead, stock, and advertising took the rest, and left us precisely \$58.45 in the hole. But then—and get this!—we paid out \$8,392.86 in taxes. Of course, I can't go on like that, but where do I go?"

"Practically all my life's work went into these stores. There've been times when I could've sold out at a fine figure. But today, who wants to buy a business that never gets out of the red? Who wants to buy debts, and a guessing contest as to what regulation will come next, and sure labor-trouble in which he hasn't a Chinaman's chance? You know, and I know, and Labor knows where we stand under the New Deal, and a New Deal Governor."

"What do you think you'll do?" I asked.

David laughed again.

"That's funny, too," he exclaimed. "I got one thing out of the government—an education in filling in forms and reports. We used to have a clerk for that, but I took over the work, and my lawyer's looking for someone to help in his income-tax department. I can have the job, and I'd like it. I'm tired of keeping ninety-one people off Relief, and being penalized for doing it.

"My kind of man is being abolished by the New Deal. Men in big business may weather the storm. Men without business are getting everything it washes ashore. But we little fellows are sunk, and we know it. We are the real Forgotten Men."

THE GOOD LIFE IN MOSCOW

BY ELENA SMIRNOVA

The author of this article is an exile from the USSR, now the wife of an American. Her story of Sovietized life in her Moscow apartment is as truthful as it is ironic.

THE kitchen of our Moscow flat was not very big—rather small, in fact. Well, that was the bourgeois idea—make an apartment of twelve rooms and never consider the possibility that the end of your reign will come sometime and that the victorious Masses will sweep away everything, including the privacy of your kitchen.

Old Matrena, the cook, had to share the kitchen with everyone else. Her mistress with her two daughters had the bedroom, the two boys shared one of the maids' rooms. The front parlor belonged to a Communist with a family of three dirty children. A young married doctor enjoyed the privilege of two rooms—he had a right to extra space, due to his research work. Then there was a veterinary student who always brought home sick rats and other dumb animals; the dressmaker Lena who shared her room with an elderly aunt; a

family of Japanese circus artists with six children; a prominent lawyer and his wife and their maid (he had the former study and the dining room—this was located in such a way that everybody had to go through it); and a young musician who occupied the former smoking room. There were thirty-two inhabitants, including the children.

Naturally, the Communist was the Manager of the flat and had to organize things. He was a conscientious fellow and believed in The Printed Word. The corridor being the natural playground of the resident children, he placed there a big sign, NO FOOTBALL, which was immediately used by the Japanese as a goal in their games. The kitchen was ornamented with signs and quotations: LEAVE MY PRIMUS¹ ALONE, FOR-

¹ Primus: a kerosene stove used extensively for cooking.

BIDDEN TO STEAL PRIMUS NEEDLES. On the wall over the oven, he hung a big picture of Stalin with a sign underneath: SOCIALISM WILL GIVE FREEDOM TO WOMEN. On the bathroom door he pasted a poster stolen from a telephone booth: FORBIDDEN TO USE MORE THAN THREE MINUTES, and even the toilet door was decorated with a red-lettered DID YOU PULL THE CHAIN?

He had made an elaborate plan for the different families who cleaned the places of communal use, which included the kitchen, the bathroom, the toilet, and the corridor. These had to be looked after by each family and he had the problem of allotting the work. You could not divide the work per room — because the single tenants would not agree to clean as much as the tenants who had children; you could not divide per person because those who were away all day would not do the cleaning for the others' children. Finally the Communist decided that everyone should have enough sense to look after himself. This intellectual solution resulted in filth. Everybody shirked and no cleaning was done at all. When the toilet became clogged, the manager would have it cleaned at communal expense.

Then he would underline with red pencil the poster inside, which read: FORBIDDEN TO THROW TIN CANS AND BROKEN GLASS IN THE TOILET.

There was always trouble about the electric lights and water. Who would pay for the "communal lights"? And why did the doctor read in bed? The musician often had company till late hours while the Japanese were out every night to the circus, and the former waiter went to bed early. The doctor's wife was luxurious in a bourgeois manner with her water consumption and her maid warmed a full basin every Saturday night — as if she could not go to the public bath! The Japanese said they used water only for tea — what else would they use water for? When the bulb in the corridor burned out, there was no way to get money from the tenants to buy a new one. So the corridor was always dark and people tripped over trunks and baskets and cursed the Manager. But as he went to the office early and came home late, his wife was blamed for all trouble.

The first morning fight would start over the newspaper. The doctor and the lawyer subscribed for the governmental paper *Izvestia*, and the Communist got *Pravda*.

Papers were very scarce; you could not buy them on the streets without waiting in a queue. The postman came to the kitchen door and after knocking (there was no bell) would push the papers through the door. Then you could blame the neighbors for stealing them. When there was any mail, the postman would ask for the person in question, or leave the letter in the kitchen to be delivered when the addressee came home. The letter would be inspected, discussed, and commented on; often misdelivered or not delivered at all. As a rule, however, people in Moscow did not correspond much. It was not safe to put your ideas on paper.

II

Under the Soviet card system, the maids and wives who did not work would start their shopping early in the morning. You did not have to go into a shop to inquire about food. If there was no queue in front, you could just as well go by — there was nothing there: when you saw a queue you rushed to the end of it and waited your turn. There were all kinds of cards — people were divided into categories and obtained different rations accordingly. Children had special rations — enjoying the luxury of a

few eggs a month and half a pound of butter once in a great while. Sugar, sunflower seeds, oil, meat, cereals, tea, soap, herrings — everything was limited and rationed.

The three Communist “rascals”, as Matrena called them, went to school. They came home at different times — all of them being in different shifts. That kept their mother busy rushing from the kitchen to her room — after she came home from her Co-Op store with the little food she could procure. The three students were sickly-looking creatures, and mean, too. They felt so much the importance of their Communist father that they snubbed the rest of the children in the flat. They rushed around the flat, spying at all doors and picking up bits of gossip to report to their Comrade-father.

Matrena’s mistress was paralyzed and had to stay in bed all day. Her daughters worked to keep her together with the youngest brother, who was fifteen and had already combined his schooling with factory work. The other boy was a student — but had a hard time on account of his bourgeois origin and the fact that his father had been shot.

The doctor was the most troublesome tenant. He had lady clients and always grumbled about the

dirt in the corridor and the parcels spread around it. His wife worked in a library and their maid cleaned their rooms and did their cooking, reporting any news that might escape Matrena's vigilant eyes. Thus, she stated once that the doctor was going to perform an illegal operation in his room and all the flat was watching for the victim to arrive. The news proved premature and the maid was reprimanded by the Manager for spreading erroneous information.

The lawyer was a very sociable man and his rooms were always full of guests who made too much noise, considering the limited drinks they got. Finally, he divorced his wife, exchanged the best of his rooms with a friend, and left to the wife a room that had to be used as a passageway.

The dressmaker Lena was carrying private work home and lived under permanent fear of being discovered by the tax authorities. Her spinster aunt was sour and emaciated, and took life as a personal insult. Lena was a pretty girl and had numerous male friends who visited her often. In such cases the aunt retired to the kitchen where she darkly contemplated the steel face of the National Hero.

The veterinary student seldom brought girls. He was mostly in-

terested in his animals, and the only trouble was that he carelessly disposed of his autopsy victims in the toilet, which usually stopped its functioning for some time.

Matrena, however, was silly enough to boast of her fine room to her relatives in the country. Before she knew it, a young niece came to live with her and presently the niece married and had a baby, all in Matrena's small room. The first baby died, but the second lived. Matrena got used to sleeping with her nose turned to the wall.

The musician made a lot of money. He never used the kitchen and that was one reason why Matrena liked him. He got drunk rather often, however, and brought indescribable girls home—but there was no way to stop him.

The kitchen space was actually divided between the Communist's primus, the doctor's primus, Smirnov's primus, the lawyer's primus, the dressmaker's primus, the primus belonging to the Japanese, and Matrena's primus. The bachelors' primuses were stored in their rooms and taken out when used. The kitchen was not meant for so many people and was a daily battleground for the female population of the flat. Sometimes men had to interfere in order to prevent fatal fights. Nobody could enjoy

privacy and every bit of food was greedily evaluated.

Feudal combats flourished. The Communist's wife could not stand the sour aunt and would always put salt in her soup or screw up her primus so that food would burn. The sour aunt broke the Communist's wife's dishes, dirtied her pans, and referred to her children as "proletarian hooligans". She also ridiculed her clothes, insinuating that it was not to be wondered that her husband never came home.

When the front-door bell rang everyone strained his ears and counted the bells. There was an elaborate scheme on the door indicating how many bells were due to each occupant of the flat. But the bell did not work most of the time, so there ensued a system of knocks and bangs which was rather confusing. The Communist children would rush to the door in any case and inspect the visitors. Nobody could ever come unnoticed.

The Manager had quite a time trying to solve the telephone problem. The phone had been originally installed under the name of the Smirnovs. But later on the doctor insisted on having the privilege of using it, and the lawyer as well. So it was put in the former dining room. But then the Communist

also wanted to use it, and the rest of the tenants too. Hence the telephone was put in the corridor and every time it rang there was a conference to determine who would answer it, unless some of the children were near at hand. They were always eager to answer, and if they had a grudge against a tenant, they would invariably answer, "not home", and hang up.

III

Matrena's niece married a former waiter, who had not requalified himself and worked in a chemical factory. He stank of different acids and took to drinking. When drunk he used to feel like killing his wife and she had to be sheltered in Smirnov's closet, while the man investigated all rooms and looked for her under the beds. But one happy day he informed Matrena that his factory was building a special house for its staff and he would get his own apartment. He just had to pay a certain amount a month — which would be deducted from his wages, along with the other voluntary subtractions.

So Matrena began looking forward to her new flat. She knew exactly what it would be like. She would not admit that it was the old comfort of the Smirnov apart-

ment that was her model, but she dreamed of having curtains and clean windows, and perhaps even flowers on the window sill. As it was, the window sill of her present room was used as a shelf for paper bags and potatoes — nothing eatable could be left in the kitchen.

Matrena's new apartment would be clean, too. Her niece would go out early to her job and she would be left alone with the baby. She would have no posters around and no pictures of Stalin, either. She would bring her old samovar and have it in the room, not lying under her bed as at present. There was no end of little things she would think of to embellish her new place. Not that it would be hers entirely, but she knew that her niece's husband could not get a two-room apartment for himself — he had to include her in his family in order to procure such luxury.

In a year's time, Ivan announced that the house was started. Next year, it was delayed because of lack of material. Another year was required to get it in shape and finally they announced they could move. For the last two years, life in the communal flat had become more strained than ever, because everybody knew Matrena and Ivan's family were moving out and all were excited as to who could get

hold of their room. Innumerable fights took place, and the Communist Manager became nearly insane promising to satisfy everybody. The problem was solved when an outsider got an official Soviet order and moved in the day Matrena and her family left.

The new house was located quite a distance from the old flat, so Matrena had never seen it before. Their belongings were loaded onto a cab which Ivan had difficulty in hiring, and the price was exorbitant too, but you moved only once in your life. The bed was tied on the back, Matrena and the baby were hitched on behind the bundles that lay on the kitchen table, under which her niece made herself as comfortable as possible. Ivan took a tramcar. It was quite a distance and Matrena almost froze, perched on the bit of seat that was left vacant. The rope that held the bed became loose and the bed fell on the road, nearly killing a boy who was sliding on the snow. The baby began to cry, the cabman grew angry and demanded that Matrena get off and walk, as his horse could not stand the load. When Matrena flatly refused, he became arrogant and informed her that he would not drive any longer unless they paid him ten roubles additional. The women grew hysteri-

cal, the cabman started to swear, and an eager crowd gathered. In all the excitement they forgot the bed, which was promptly stolen. Then the cabman agreed to go on.

They approached a four-storied, barrack-type building with many doors which all looked alike to Matrena; but when she discovered that their entrance was No. 26, she thought it a little better than the rest. They climbed three flights of stairs and finally reached their flat. Ivan was already there. Matrena inspected the flat and found it satisfactory beyond expectations; she had never really expected to have a bathroom with a real tub in it. But she still had fears that some unexpected co-habitant might turn up in a corner. Ivan felt so happy that he gave his wife only a perfunctory beating for losing the bed, and they unpacked in quiet. As it was getting dark, Matrena wanted to turn the light on, but it did not burn. That must be her mistake — the new bulbs could not already be burned out. They spread the mattress on the kitchen floor, turned on the heat, and went to sleep.

The next day Matrena was dispatched to look for furniture. The only thing they had was a kitchen table and two chairs, not to count the mattress. Ivan said she must find a bed, a couple of chairs, a

table, and perhaps a couch for herself. Matrena was really touched with Ivan's kindness.

Buying furniture was a new problem for Matrena. Ivan told her where the shops were and she managed to get there all right, carrying the baby with her. The first shop was rather nice. Big and light, but empty. There were a number of fancy tiny tables, the kind the Smirnovs had in their drawing room, a tall mirror, and a fancy lamp. She timidly asked for a bed. They did not have any beds. And the tables might be coming in next week, unless she wanted some of the original French cuties right there in the corner. No, she did not care for French cuties so much. How about a couple of chairs? Chairs? Oh, yes, they had some chairs in another department. She found the chair department, but all chairs were sold and new ones were expected some time in the future. In this same department, Matrena saw a nice big bed in the middle of the room, with a nice spring mattress. She put the baby on it and walked around it in delight. That was the very thing. But the salesman hurried to inform her that this bed was not for sale. It was just a model. A sample. A thing not to be sold. If she was in need of a bed, she might try an-

other shop, not far from here. Matrena was disappointed but she could well understand that a sample bed could not be sold to anybody as plain as she was. Perhaps if she were a Communist. . . . So she tried the other shop. That was the very place. Beds—in plenty. She decided upon a broad iron affair and asked the price. It was exorbitant, but then you had to have a bed. The man looked at the baby and then asked:

“Your marriage certificate, citizen?”

“My what?”

“Your marriage certificate.”

“Well, I am not married,” Matrena had to admit. “This is my little grand-nephew.”

“I don’t care whose child it is. You don’t get a bed without a marriage certificate. These are only sold to newly-married couples.”

Of course, Matrena should have known better. How could she think that so many beds would be sold out just like that, as if they were rotten cucumbers! She was ashamed of her own stupidity.

“What about a couch? Could I buy that?” she asked timidly.

“We don’t sell couches here. Try another place.”

Matrena tried several other places. No beds were available. No chairs either. She heard other peo-

ple inquiring about wardrobes, dining tables, writing desks, with the same results. Furniture was made somewhere and sold somehow—but there was no way of getting anything. Presently she discovered an armchair that could be transformed into a bed. But she could not carry it home and asked permission to let it stay in the shop until Ivan was through at his work. But the manager could not promise her anything—the chair might be gone by that time. So she phoned Ivan and he told her to wait. She sat in the chair until she was finally invited to move out of the shop—it was time to close. She pushed the chair outside and waited in the street. Ivan finally arrived. There was no way of getting into the tramcar with such a bulky thing. So they carried it, the baby sleeping in the chair. People stopped them, asking where they bought such a beauty, how much they paid, etc. It was Ivan who used the chair that first night. The women slept on the floor and the baby in the bathtub.

IV

A few days later Ivan came home with good news—he had subscribed for a complete bedroom set in one of the special furniture

stores. He had just to pay a certain amount a month and wait for his turn. There were other people on the list, but they would all be supplied gradually. In the meantime they had the camp bed and the convertible chair, which was given to Matrena to sleep on. Soon, it broke in the middle and Matrena had to put an empty box under it to hold the two pieces together.

Nevertheless, you could not get away from the fact that you had a private flat of your own. And that was a comfort. Even though the heating was poor and unreliable. You could never tell whether the man who looked after the boiler would not suddenly develop one of his drinking spells and quit his job for a couple of days. Of course, you had to pay for the heat just the same—but you could not expect a new house with the most modern heating system to function smoothly. A couple of times the tubes burst because of frost and the place was inundated—but you had to expect small accidents like that. The heating radiators were placed in the middle of the wall so that it rather spoiled the view—but then you could see that this was a flat with central heating.

As a rule, the plumbing worked—but there were altogether too many pipes. And they were dis-

tributed in the most unexpected places. Especially the drain pipe from the toilet that went through the living room. You could hear all that happened upstairs and it got worse when the pipes were stopped. Well, it takes some time before people begin to realize that throwing old cans and cardboard in the drain causes trouble.

The bathroom was very handy for storing potatoes. When the baby had to be washed, his tin tub was filled in the kitchen—and grown-up people could always go to the public baths. You could not have potatoes loose in the kitchen—the baby might eat them.

The gas stove was a puzzle to Matrena. You put a match to it and it said “Boom” and went out. Or it did not say anything and just hissed slowly until you realized that the room was full of gas and there was no flame whatever. It made Matrena so nervous—especially one time when the boom was so strong that the benzine tank on the kitchen table was overturned and quite accidentally did not catch fire—that she decided to stop using the gas.

The doors were the worst, though. They would not close. They were such pretty doors, too—at the beginning. But with time they became swollen and sunk,

and you could not close them to save your life. The same with the windows. Something was wrong with the frames and Ivan had to file off some of the wood—and then they became so loose that there was a continual draught, especially when the baby's ball knocked out a pane of glass, and this was replaced with a sheet of cardboard.

The wall paper was just freshly put on. And such lovely paper it was. Bright red with tiny lilac flowers and all alike in both rooms and the corridor, except a little piece near the living-room window, which had to be patched with a piece of yellow paper, as they obviously did not have enough of the other. But that looked even decorative—such a bright spot all along the window. It soon became all spotted, however, and developed bulges like air balloons. These burst now and again, the paper hanging in empty bags. The whitewash of the ceiling was rather disconcerting too—it kept falling off into your soup. Even the floors were bulging and nothing would stand steadily on them.

But when their first rent bill arrived they got the worst shock. Although they did not use much light (what with the lamps burning out, the lines being torn, and

the switches broken), the electricity, water, and rent combined to such an exaggerated amount that Ivan was at a loss. The rent rate was figured on the basis of Ivan's having "extra space". The room norm was nine cubic meters per person and the House Committee decided that Matrena did not count, not being a Worker, and living like a parasite on Ivan's account. Matrena was hurt, but you could not argue with the Committee.

After careful consideration, Ivan had to sub-rent one of his rooms to a peasant family. They brought all their furniture, and their three children proved to be nice playmates for the baby. Their mother had a suckling pig and the pig was put in the bathroom. The peasant was a shoemaker by profession, but got a job as a night watchman and slept most of the day, doing bits of shoe repair in his leisure moments.

There were constantly several pairs of felt boots drying in the kitchen, and with the peasant's newborn and the pig in the bathroom, there was quite a comfortable, homey atmosphere.

In fact, Matrena reflected, you couldn't get away from it—having your own flat in Moscow was a real luxury.

MADAME LA SECRETARY PERKINS

BY HELEN R. WHITELY

THE New Deal *Reich*, strange to say, still retains certain resemblances to the structure of American Constitutional Government as set up in 1789. There still are visible, upon close examination, vestiges of a system of three co-ordinate branches—Legislative, Executive, and Judicial—whose functions today inhere to three individuals: John L. Lewis, Dr. Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Senator Bob La Follette. But at this juncture, a comparison of old and new techniques of administration comes hard up against a singular paradox: namely, that while an executive agency styling itself Labor is thus actually operating the federal government, the Department of Labor has as little to do with the job as has the House Committee on the Disposition of Useless State Documents.

This remarkable situation has come about not because the first woman Cabinet member, Miss Frances Perkins (Mrs. Paul C. Wilson) has overlooked any opportunity for making herself an

important figure in the Administration. It is simply because La Secretary, failing to understand the full import of the grandiose schemes which fill the air above the White House, discloses an extraordinary day-to-day talent for invariably doing the wrong thing. Her unhappy story as an adviser in Dr. Roosevelt's fireside council is the chronicle of frustration and of a woman's hysterical battle with an environment in which she does not belong. As the leader of a Cause, she has met nothing but defeat. She has hung onto her job only because she herself does not fully comprehend the extent to which she has failed, and because Mrs. Roosevelt and other fiery feminists are loath to admit to male politicians that the first, and perhaps last, woman Cabinet member has been a sorry failure. No wonder that La Secretary, as she tentatively surveys the debris of wrecked hopes, often becomes angry in public, and occasionally tearful.

Miss Perkins has fought assiduously since 1933 to build up and

extend the bureaucratic puissance of her Department: during the past four years of Roosevelt rule, she has seen Labor messiahs spring from obscurity to the highest places of command; she has witnessed Labor organizations become the dominant force in American government; she has held the title of Secretary of Labor in an amazing historical period when the dictatorship of men who claim to represent the Workers has all but been accomplished. Yet she herself has played no important role in the Labor movement; her Department remains just a bureau, the Secretary just an officeholder. In a time when men exhibiting more than ordinary incompetence find themselves among the Republic's rulers, Miss Perkins stands in virtual obscurity.

To understand the chain of misfortune which has marked La Madame's national career, it is necessary to go back to pre-New Deal days, to the Winter of 1932, when her name first was mentioned as a Cabinet possibility. The suggestion, stemming from Dr.-elect Roosevelt, that she be given the job, brought a howl from the rugged leaders of the group then known, in sweet innocence, as Organized Labor. The Department of Labor, granted executive rank

in 1913 by Congress, was an open gesture in the workingman's direction, and the powerful trade-union organizations had always gracefully assumed the task of naming Secretaries. So that when Hyde Park let it be known that a woman Secretary had landed the job—a woman moreover who possessed a background of social service work—the consternation was immense. But this wasn't all: Frances Perkins didn't even belong to a union!

William Green raved and stormed. Said he: "Labor can never become reconciled to the selection made." Said La Madame Perkins: "I feel just a little odd." And thus, under troubled auspices, commenced her Washington career.

The lady brought with her a background of years of Uplifting; she was fired with Do-Good idealism; she had enthusiastically enlisted among those who, in the words of Rexford G. Tugwell, would "Make America Over". Also, she brought with her a New England ancestry, an extremely broad "a", and eyeglasses used in the manner of a lorgnette. She wore hats *à la tricorne*, calculated to stir the envy of the then Queen of England, and affected clothes of the successful business-woman type. In the manner of many

Uplifters, she gave the impression of looking down upon the workaday world with a faint if indefinable distaste. Finally, she made a man—even one who had left the union coal mines so long ago that sweaty labor was merely an unpleasant memory—feel that he was something that had just emerged from beneath a stone. As General Hugh Johnson wrote: “Her very manner of saying, ‘Good morning, gentlemen’, is a kind of automatic insult.”

But, before examining the highlights of La Secretary’s career, let us start at the beginning. Fanny Cora Perkins, born in Boston fifty-five years ago, began girding for her career in Uplift by studying sociology at aristocratic Mount Holyoke College. After her graduation in 1902, she devoted several years to Episcopal Church work in Worcester, following this with a period of teaching in a girls’ school at Chicago. Later, she versed herself in economics at the University of Pennsylvania while working for a Philadelphia social-welfare agency. With this helpful background of carrying free food baskets to the poor, Miss Perkins was called to labor in the Midwest’s chief proletarian vineyard—Hull House—then assuming national importance as a monu-

ment to Jane Addams. Sometime afterwards, returning East, Fanny Cora went to work for the New York Consumers’ League, where she experienced the profound joy of the professional Do-Gooder in harassing small back-street concerns in the interest of the uninterested consumer.

The future Secretary’s real career, however, began with the Triangle Shirt-Waist Factory fire in New York City in 1911. From Washington Square, Miss Perkins witnessed the scene of horror in which more than 100 working girls died. This tragic event was to mark her life; it not only made a deep emotional impression upon a highly emotional young woman, but it also gave her the opportunity to meet forward-looking Politicians. Following the fire and its attendant investigations, she was made a member of a civic committee on factory safety, an organization created to bring about improved factory laws. Years later, on the eve of her pilgrimage to Washington, she was to remark on this phase of her life as follows:

Soon after the Triangle fire, a Citizens’ Committee held a meeting in Madison Square Garden. . . . They gave me a job on this committee. . . . Well, the thrill of that offer was the biggest thing in my life. I couldn’t begin to compare it with anything,

even a Cabinet appointment. Remember, I was just a girl who didn't know exactly what she could do, and all these important men came along and offered her this important position. It was here that the men of New York came to my rescue — engineers, architects, businessmen. They knew what was needed in the way of factory inspection, and they taught me all they knew.

The result of "their" teaching was a code of factory laws. Miss Perkins, already well-known as an Albany lobbyist, returned to the State Capitol to push the legislation through an always apathetic Legislature. During her tenure in Albany, she met such eminent statesmen as Alfred E. Smith, Robert F. Wagner, and eventually, Franklin D. Roosevelt. It was Governor Smith who first named her to the State Department of Labor; she was appointed State Industrial Commissioner under the Roosevelt régime. Thus, quite early in her national career, Fanny Cora was to perceive the political advisability of taking tea with the First-Lady-To-Be who, in turn, was happy to champion the talents of a young woman destined to go far in the crusade for Uplift.

II

With such a chain of momentous experiences and contacts be-

hind her, the new Labor Secretary, in 1933, arrived in Washington with a full dossier of preconceived ideas of what she would do. Miss Perkins had attracted attention before her appointment by sniping at the unemployment statistics of the Hoover Administration. They were, she declared, reactionary propaganda, designed to mislead the Rugged Voter as to the seriousness of the Depression. Come the New Deal, she said in effect, and all this would change for the better. She promised there would be "prompt, regular, and candid statistics on unemployment". These were illustrious words, and caused a ripple of approval in the press. Well — perhaps she intended to keep her promise; but the fact remains that no unemployment census has been undertaken in five years. Obviously, the lady failed to comprehend the vote-snaring purposes of the More Abundant Dole. Her lack of vision was evident in this exalted post-election statement:

I want to keep clear the conception that President-elect Roosevelt has voiced, that the Government of the United States is a combination of the Federal Government and that of the various States. It is to the working out of this constructive thought in the field of Labor that I wish to apply myself.

Shades of the National Labor Relations Board!

The Lady Secretary came to Washington prepared to tackle the unemployment problem not only with "prompt, regular, and candid statistics", but with large swatches of the taxpayers' money as well, for it was the dawn of the Billion-Dollar era in public financing. She grabbed eagerly for the Works Program, but that was snatched by Genial Harry Hopkins and Honest Harold Ickes, who compromised their Uplift urge with a two-fisted brand of political expediency.

Thwarted in that direction, La Secretary glimpsed another opportunity, and endorsed "in principle" the perennial demand of the American Federation of Labor for a thirty-hour week. She followed this with a characteristic step, proposing that the thirty-hour bill be amended to give the Secretary of Labor authority to limit the hours of toil and to create boards to fix wages. Such super-powers, of course, had not yet been acquired by John L. Lewis himself, yet Miss Perkins demanded them on a note of refreshing political innocence, at the same time indignantly denying that she wished to dictate. But her maneuvers were in vain. Ignoring her plea as well as her innocence, Congress passed the National In-

dustrial Recovery Act, which opened up a new vista on the road to Collectivism. Madame Secretary accepted her defeat in strained silence; on the eve of the NRA hearings on the Steel code, she journeyed to the Pennsylvania mill-towns to meet the proletariat at first-hand; she returned to Washington to moan about the injustices inflicted by Capitalism upon the hell-roaring steel puddlers; and discovered that no one was particularly interested in her views. The NRA, it seemed, had relegated Madame Secretary's Department to the background of the Labor picture.

In the background the Department remained while La Secretary bungled through a series of major defeats. Typical of her insignificance during the Blue-Eagle epoch was the occasion of the 1934 automobile strike, a conflict which, while only a skirmish compared with later upheavals, laid the groundwork for the coming revolution in Michigan. The strike was Page-One material; there was much loose talk of Labor's injustices, of Labor's responsibilities, of Labor's right to run the country: but there was scant mention of the one governmental department upon which the duties of settlement naturally devolved. While La Sec-

retary sat on the sidelines and fumed, the strike was compromised by Dr. Roosevelt and General Hugh Johnson, on the grounds that one Michigan vote was worth two from any of the less-populated States. Later, Madame Perkins went gunning for the bellicose General, and finally had the grim satisfaction of witnessing his removal from office as NRA Administrator. But whatever pleasure La Secretary derived from this crack-down achievement—if crack-down achievement it was—she added nothing to her personal prestige as a National Leader and Shaper of Events.

In 1935, when the National Labor Relations Board was created by the Wagner Act, Congress provided that it be named by the President. Although La Secretary had hoped to incorporate the Board into her organization, the NLRB, as ultimately organized, owed no responsibility to the Department of Labor. Miss Perkins, harassed and frantic, rushed to Capitol Hill to plead with a congressional committee to place the judicial and conciliation functions of the Board in her Department. But once more she failed. And some months later, when Congress set up the vast Social Security program, long a fetish of La Secre-

tary, full powers were given to a board not even remotely connected with the Perkins office.

On the face of such evidence, it would appear that Madame La Secretary has invoked a permanent unpopularity on Capitol Hill. But just how much her diplomatic blunders have had to do with this unhappy situation, no one can say. Quite early in her Cabinet career, Miss Perkins committed a number of tactical errors which illustrated her lack of political acumen; and New Dealers who commit tactical errors have a habit of fading from the Washington scene. For example, she once suggested that the South, particularly Georgia, offered a superb new market for shoe manufacturers, her edict being uttered with all the casualness of an Adventist missionary discussing the naked aborigines of darkest Africa. Whereupon Southern gentlemen, insulted as they had not been since the carpet-baggers sent a negro to the United States Senate, began to oil their derringers. And when Atlanta newspapers derisively printed photographs of well-shod citizens walking the streets of that metropolis, the game was up. Sometime later, when Madame Perkins visited Capitol Hill, her presence was resented by Southerners and congressmen alike.

Then there was the occasion when La Secretary bruised the professional dignity of members of the House Labor Committee, by requesting them to come to her office to discuss the fine points of a pending proletarian measure. As Miss Perkins' Department was created by Congress and exists by sufferance of Congress, she should have been well aware that if a Secretary of Labor wishes to discuss legislation with a congressional committee, the Secretary calls upon the committee at the committee's convenience. The House gentlemen were not backward in recalling to the Lady's mind this point of political etiquette.

These, then, are some of the imbroglios which have strewn Miss Perkins' path. But they are trifling matters, indeed, compared to a problem which until recently confronted her every day in the round of her routine duties. The problem was highly masculine in nature, and went by the name of the Honorable Edward Francis McGrady, Assistant Secretary of Labor and the most robust friend "The Workers" have had since the days of Samuel Gompers. (At least he *was* until he went to work for the other side, accepting employment with a group of Economic Royalists called the Radio

Corporation of America.) The Hon. Mr. McGrady is a tough Irishman, and he knows it. So does Fanny Cora. Far from mimicking Madame's broad "a" when employing such familiar phrases as the "clawsses" and the "mawsses", Edward talks out the side of his mouth with the articulateness of a printer who just dropped a stereotyped plate on his foot. In fact, McGrady acquired his vocabulary in a press room, from which surroundings he arose to become a Labor Leader. In the same rough-and-tumble school he learned the fundamentals of Labor-leading, which are based on the thesis that the more you promise, the less you will have to deliver. The Honorable Edward doesn't know anything about social service — and doesn't give a damn, either. He is interested only in results. Needless to say, he was not selected for his Department job by Miss Perkins.

But in spite of all his crudities, the Hon. McGrady, to put it squarely, stole Fanny's thunder. In a super-political world where men occupy all the important posts and speak of Feminism in a distinctly patronizing manner, Edward made his mark. It was McGrady who negotiated settlements when John Lewis

and the mine operators were shadow boxing; it was McGrady who soothed the auto workers when first they were demanding double wages for half-time; it was McGrady who visited the waterfront and calmed sailors who were threatening to scuttle ships unless the galley-cooks served *flets mignon*; it was McGrady who flew here and there all over the country when Labor troubles came to a crisis. During those titillating days, Miss Perkins sat quiescently in her Washington office, reading the headlines — “McGrady Settles Strike”. No doubt there was a feeling of bitter humiliation within her, and a surge of helplessness. The first woman Cabinet member was eclipsed at a crucial stage in Labor history.

But, alas, there was absolutely nothing she could do. Only once did she succeed in enlivening Page One. This was on the occasion of her leaving a Washington dinner party to stay in a phone booth for half an hour, holding the transcontinental line open while a group of steamship employees, meeting in a West Coast butcher shop, settled a minor controversy. Relating the incident to reporters later, La Madame Secretary said coyly: “You can imagine how I must have looked when it was over”.

III

Madame Perkins waged her real Armageddon during the automobile strikes of last Winter. This was Big League stuff, indeed. The strikes came opportunely at the very time when reports were current in Washington that the First Woman Cabinet Member was about to be retired to private life. La Secretary, eyeing the Michigan fracas from afar, sensed an opportunity to confound her critics and at the same time rake in a few laurel leaves for the Department. Sit-downers were occupying the General Motors plants in Flint; the Hon. Frank Murphy, Michigan’s messianic governor, was carefully doing nothing to enforce the law; even Miss Perkins wasn’t dead certain whether she approved the seizure of private property; but at least she comprehended that the moment for Action had arrived. There would be no headlines for Ed McGrady this time; she would settle things herself.

The newspaper boys were summoned to the Department and Fanny Cora issued her statement: She was calling in the representatives of Labor and Capital for a nice, brotherly chat together. The stage was set for a little “intelligent, educative relation between

government and industry". It should all be perfectly simple, the newspaper boys inferred, without Ed McGrady hanging around to lower the tone of debate. But when the General Motors executives arrived in Washington, they stubbornly refused to discuss affairs with John Lewis as long as their plants were being held for ransom.

"Why," exclaimed Miss Perkins, deeply hurt, "it is as though I would refuse to talk to a man who has parked his car on my lawn, refuse even to listen to why he parked it there, or why he wouldn't move it away."

To La Perkins, the Revolution in Michigan was as simple as that.

But the Lady persisted. She couldn't believe that the automobile makers actually intended to hold out. So she tried again. She invited Alfred P. Sloan, Jr., president of General Motors, to return to Washington. He responded courteously, but again told her that he would not meet with Lewis as long as the strikers held the plants. This was too much for the Lady Secretary. She developed hysterics. "He ran out on me!" she sobbed.

Still in a fevered state of mind, Miss Perkins composed a remarkable letter which she addressed, but never mailed, to Sloan. She told incredulous reporters to whom she

showed the missive that inspiration for the writing of it had come to her during church services. In the letter she admonished the General Motors president to "do unto others as you would have done unto you", to "agree with thy adversary quickly", to "forgive us our trespasses". Such sentiments struck deeply into the calloused souls of the gentlemen of the press, and they lost no time in broadcasting the facts to an awe-struck nation.

But the Secretary of Labor was still not done with the strike. She wrote another letter, supposedly without the help of Providence, which she did send. It was in effect a message to Congress demanding the power of subpoena to compel the attendance she desired. Congress, as usual, ignored her request. Meanwhile the stage had already been set for the White Knight, Governor Murphy, to negotiate a settlement. Again Miss Perkins was left empty-handed; the fruits of victory had fallen elsewhere; her most noted act during the entire Michigan upheaval had been to declare that Industry's objection to the seizure of plants was a "legalistic technicality".

It was only months later, when sit-down strikes and nation-wide seizure of plants had aroused a public clamor for statements from

an embarrassed White House, that Miss Perkins felt it safe to change her mind. In a letter to Representative Ditter, a Pennsylvania Republican who had asked her views following a United States Circuit Court of Appeals decision holding sit-down strikes illegal, she dismissed her previous statement as "an offhand remark in an informal general press conference". "It is not," she wrote, "and never has been an official position of the Department of Labor or of the Secretary that sit-down strikes are either lawful, desirable or appropriate. . . . From many aspects the method appears to be one which should be abandoned. . . . There are many possibilities of its abuse and the hazard of lack of discipline is serious. . . . I believe it will be abandoned by the unions."

But that was how La Secretary felt in the first paragraph only. Later in the same letter she hedged her position and came to the defense of "American wage-earners". She wrote: "I want to assure you, sir, that American wage-earners — however unwise they have been at times in the selection of method or their behavior during industrial disputes — are not revolutionary in thought or feeling and do not seek to impair civil government, ruin industry, or change our conceptions

of private property." Now surely the Honorable Secretary of Labor here appears to understand the conservatism of the inarticulate American masses who labor by the sweat of their brow: but where on her list of one-hundred-per-cent patriots will she place such citizens as John L. Lewis, Sidney Hillman, David Dubinsky, and their fellow agitators of the CIO?

Since the days of revolution in Michigan, the Lady Secretary's sympathies have expanded to enfold the whole CIO program. The extent to which her faith in Lewis and his heelers has flowered, despite their persistent violation of Labor contracts, is indicated by this bit of Americana from the July 1 issue of the *New York Times*: "Secretary Perkins asserted today that she had observed nothing to prove that the Committee for Industrial Organization was in the hands of irresponsible leaders."

When Lewis early this Summer began to lose ground in his strike against the independent steel companies, Miss Perkins hurried to the White House. Dr. Roosevelt, who had already decided to appoint a Mediation Board, allowed his eminent Secretary the privilege of announcing the appointment. Only to announce the appointment, however, and not to select the

membership, as became obvious when the Hon. McGrady appeared in council.

But upon the failure of the Mediation Board to save the day for Lewis' shock-troops, La Perkins took matters in her own hands. The Hon. Martin L. Davey, prominent tree surgeon and Governor of Ohio, is authority for the story that Miss Perkins suggested to him that he "kidnap" the heads of Republic Steel and the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company and hold them until they signed a CIO agreement. Miss Perkins later denied indignantly that she had made the suggestion. Such an agreement must be entirely voluntary, she declared. All she had asked the Governor to do was to use the subpoena power of the State. In other words, the cop need only threaten with a rubber hose to inspire a "voluntary" confession. Said the Secretary of Labor: "I merely suggested to Governor Davey . . . that the State of Ohio had the subpoena power to bring all concerned into a joint conference method". . . . Even as good a Democrat

as Davey couldn't swallow that one.

And so with all her diplomatic blunders, her hysteria, and her obvious ineptitude, Fanny Cora remains in the Cabinet. Month after month, ignored by Congress, trampled upon by the titans of Labor and Industry — in October, for the first time in history, the Secretary of Labor was pointedly *not* asked to address the A.F. of L.'s annual convention — she continues to preside smugly over her impotent Bureau. Dr. Roosevelt in his omniscient wisdom has chosen Madame Perkins to be his figure-head, while John Lewis, who has no illusions about the identity of the nation's Labor dictator, makes Labor history.

And so long as La Secretary continues on her paper throne — until, perhaps, her alienation of governors and congressmen alike makes it necessary for the Administration to Take Steps — so long will her Department rank as the No. 1 donkey on Dr. Roosevelt's merry-go-round. And just so long will La Secretary provide first-class comedy on the Republic's political stage.



THE OLD-TIME RELIGION

BY KENNETH CAMPBELL

MY PARENTS were members of the Christian Church, and long before I could read and write, I knew that we must excuse as ignorant, misguided, or vindictive those Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians who insisted on calling our denomination "Campbellites". For was it not clearly written in the New Testament that the disciples were first called *Christians* at Antioch? And was there any Biblical authority for *Baptist*, *Methodist*, or *Presbyterian*? Obviously the Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians had taken liberties with Holy Writ. We risked no such tamperings with the Word of God. Our creed, short and modest, was: "Where the Bible speaks, we speak; where the Bible is silent, we are silent."

We Christians gave much thought to the errors of the Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians. There was always the hope that they might be reclaimed. But no similar hope was fostered for the few Catholics and Episcopalians in town. From what we knew of their

departure from the teachings of the Good Book, we judged them already in outer darkness, far beyond the light of salvation. The Catholics worshipped idols, paid priests to forgive their sins, were ready, willing, and even anxious to kiss the Pope's big toe. The Episcopalian preachers (the use of the word *rector* was, in an attempt to curb village ribaldry, discouraged in our community) actually wore nightgowns in the pulpit! All these pagan shenanigans horrified us, and made us realize how doubly fortunate we were in belonging to the One True Church.

Vigorous in our defense of the faith, ardent in our prayers for the unregenerate, we nevertheless, as a body, did not stress religion all the week. Like our best clothes, it was in effect stored from Sunday to Sunday. No Christian adult doubted it was sinful to absent himself from Sunday services; no Christian child but felt himself flirting with the fiery pit if he played hookey from Sunday school: it was plainly set forth in the Bible that the first

day of the week was to be observed by the Faithful. But few under sixty had come to think of the Wednesday evening prayer-meeting as essential to safety in the life beyond. Certainly there was nothing in the New Testament that set Wednesday as a date for worship. There was, furthermore, nothing there indicating the necessity for the family altar, which the preacher occasionally sought to establish in the homes of his flock. His efforts thus to improve on the outline of salvation met, I believe, with total defeat. I was seventeen, and visiting Presbyterian friends, before I knew family worship as part of a daily routine.

My formal religious education, then, was confined mainly to the Sunday school. It has been years since I have attended Sunday school, but I understand that modern youngsters resent going, and are so stubborn in their refusals that anxious parents are consulting psychiatrists. Claiming no psychiatric skills, I think the statement of the problem a simple one. Nowadays, I hear, Sunday-school teachers are trained; therefore they must naturally attempt to teach in a somewhat formal manner, reflecting, even though perhaps faintly, the schoolchild's weekly existence. Therein lies the rub.

With us, Sunday school was unlike anything else the week had offered. It was a social gathering where instruction was an entirely negligible force. We liked it.

There we sang boisterously a few songs like *Brighten the Corner Where You Are* and *Jesus Wants Me for a Sunbeam* (called hymns with a superb disregard for hymnology), and then rushed pell-mell to our "room". Our teacher was always a popular matron or maiden lady, unless, by chance, there had been found a settled young girl who could be counted on not to dance or to play cards. Pedagogically in advance of her time, our teacher had discovered the modern educational principle of allowing children to do as they pleased. Manners that would have brought out the peach-tree switch or razor-strop at home were countenanced smilingly by this martyr.

In the midst of our unbridled exuberance, our teacher tried woe-fully hard to interest us in the memorizing of Golden Texts, and in the Bible stories illustrated in color on our lesson cards. Although unimpressed by the *raison d'être* of the cards, we liked them for themselves, and regarded them as high art. The infant Moses, none the worse for his solitary voyage in the basket, smiled up happily at

Pharaoh's daughter, who, apparently in no hurry to take her plunge, directed his rescue from the river bank. The ravens hovered over Elijah, whose upstretched hands indicated his implicit trust in the dietary discretion of the birds. Christ, just delivered of the Beatitudes, floated miraculously in a small cloud on the mountain. Adam and Eve in the Garden, a popular number because of its questionable modesty, was the card most treasured by juvenile collectors.

Our teacher struggled courageously to teach us, by the Socratic method, whatever of virtue there was in the historical incidents depicted on our cards, but usually resorted, after a few moments, to a rapid summation of her own. This good woman had, there is little doubt, the stuff of heroes in her, else she could not have endured the weekly thirty minutes alone with a group of uninhibited brats who, by interruptions, personal disputes, and primitive attempts at practical joking, made any orderly procedure impossible. Only a full share of the Holy Spirit restrained her, I am now convinced, from kicking us severally back into the church auditorium when the lesson period was over.

We learned even less of religion

at day school. The Bible reading (muttered without comment by the teacher) was followed by the Lord's Prayer recited in unison. The cumulative value of this species of daily devotions may be guessed from the fact that we were never able at the end to agree on the exact order of "the kingdom, the power, and the glory". These phrases I mastered only years later, when I found them printed in the Book of Common Prayer.

It was at home, under the simple guidance of my own curiosity, that my interest in the Bible was stimulated. In the bookcase, with the Complete Works of Dickens, Thackeray, Eliot, and Scott, was a copy of *The Bible Gallery*, illustrated by Gustave Doré. This book enchanted me. Being used to no art more elevated than *Washington Crossing the Delaware*, I here had my circumscribed little soul lifted to the heights. The Flood, where man and beast forgot their natural enmity in desperate attempts at self-preservation, filled me with an ecstatic horror. Samson Slaying the Lion inspired me with dreams of physical prowess. Belshazzar's Feast depicted an architectural spaciousness that aroused my esthetic appreciation even before I knew what architecture was. I saw Jesus Walking on

the Water, and there grew in me a belief in miracles that still persists. The dark mood of *The Crucifixion* drained the sunlight from the bright day outside, and taught me the beauty of tragedy before I knew the Greeks had a word to say on the subject.

The text accompanying these pictures led me to read the various chapters indicated in the Bible itself. Today, when critics condemn certain movies as vicious, and dangerous to the morals of children, they are answered by others who submit certain portions of the Bible as immoral, and consequently perilous to the young. It has not remained for me to call such a procedure the cheap thing that it is. It is granted that some portions of the Bible, studied from an adult point of view, contain elements that are to some persons immoral. But to the ordinary child, only "the story" stands out, and he is at no pains to subject the narrative to a moral scrutiny. Perhaps it was criminal for Abraham to frighten young Isaac nearly to death on the mountain; perhaps the boy was, from that day on, a neurotic. I saw in the story only the devotion of an old man to his God, and his anguish at thinking he had to slay his beloved son. Perhaps Ruth was a forward hussy to lay herself invitingly at

the feet of Boaz. I did not think of her as a delinquent. To me, she was the faithful woman whose speech beginning "Intreat me not to leave thee" represented the epitome of loyalty and self-sacrifice. Perhaps Christ was a Communist, one whose ideas put into practice would destroy our economic system. To me he said, "Suffer little children to come unto me", and thereby illuminated childhood with an hitherto unsuspected dignity and glory.

II

Until I was eleven, the Bible was a source of comfort. Then, instead of continuing to leave church after Sunday school, I began sitting through the preaching service immediately following, and realized that I must have misunderstood entirely the purpose of the Bible. It was not a collection of inspiring, exciting stories; it was the Word of God, and by its standards I was a lost soul. From its pages the preacher proved that the unbaptized could never "enter the kingdom of Heaven or partake of the joys therein". Using it as a syllabus, he expatiated on the sins deadly to the Christian life — dancing, card-playing, theater-going, drinking. These four he described repeatedly

in minute detail. They were to him a quartet of horrors, but were apparently as nothing compared to another sin he excoriated — “the sin of the flesh”. This special sin he did not anatomize, but I guessed vaguely that all the others were but as mileposts along the Broad Highway leading toward it.

The thoughts of sin confused me. At eleven, I had no first-hand knowledge of any of the pitfalls mentioned, but from the preacher’s descriptions I concluded that they all seemed agreeable, and that the one mysterious sin — “the sin of the flesh” — must be downright pleasant. I suspected my impressions to be in some way faulty, for from the pulpit the preacher assured me weekly of the one distinctly unpalatable feature common to all the sins: they damned me to eternal fire if I did not take steps to combat them. And I was in a state of sin whether I realized it or not. Baptism “of the water and of the Spirit” — that was the only hope of safety in this world and the one to come. The Lord had no pity on procrastinators.

Convinced of my unsaved and extremely dangerous position, I delayed each week the necessary steps to salvation. All I had to do to make the Devil howl in defeat was to make the profession of faith and

submit to baptism. But each Sunday, when the invitation hymn was sung, the Devil drew a red herring across my path. He hinted that maybe I ought to sin a little before I gave up the evil of the world. And so I had the experience of going through my first “protracted meeting” as an unsaved soul.

Our meeting was held in the Summer, during the month when both townsfolk and farmers could most easily attend. As the church was too small to accommodate the crowds attracted, services were held in a renovated warehouse. The standpatters of other denominations scoffed openly at the idea of worship in a former tobacco storehouse, but our leaders attributed such criticism to jealousy. For what other church in town was financially able to hire “a world-famous evangelist” and his chorus leader?

These other churches were also suspected of being fearful of losing members who, attracted by the novelty of worship in a warehouse, would incidentally hear, for the first time, the Good Tidings correctly interpreted. They made efforts, none too secret, to prevent their members from affiliating with us during the meeting. And though they were successful with their more docile adults, theirs was, with

their children, a lost cause. While our meeting was in progress, the other Sunday schools were lamentably small. One Baptist sister made herself annually very unpopular by trying to waylay the urchins of her church as they passed in droves on Sunday morning to the then-hallowed site of the warehouse. Even threats that they would be disbarred from attendance at the annual Baptist Sunday-school picnic were fruitless. Well the children knew that the Campbellites would, at the close of their meeting, stir up a picnic of proportions to make the Baptist outing an amateur event.

The church furniture in the converted warehouse was rigidly unecclesiastical. For pews, there were folding chairs rented from undertaking establishments in the nearest city; for pulpit, a table placed in the center of a large platform raised four feet from the floor. The table was flanked on either side with chairs for the evangelist, our deacons and elders, visiting ministers of the faith, and an occasional clergyman of another denomination—the sporadic harbinger of that spirit which today would prove all denominations alike under the skin, and even the Jew and the Christian to have so much in common that they are not justified

in remaining apart. At the back of the platform were seats for the chorus and the orchestra, the latter being composed of a piano, a violin or two, and whatever brasses were available. Over the platform floated banners bearing no strange device, but such certain truths as “Jesus Saves”, “God Will Take Care of You”, and “Come to Him Today”.

The morning, afternoon, and evening services, primarily for adults, were urged on all who had reached the “age of accountability”. To help us youngsters know when we had arrived at this mystic period in our development, a special worker held daily Bible classes, and another organized a Children’s Choir. We learned all the fundamental Biblical statistics, such as the names of the major and the minor prophets; we sang with roof-lifting abandon. From time to time we were put through our paces at the evening services. Our plaintively flat enunciation of the names of the prophets evoked only smiles of approval from parents and relatives; but one of our songs, set to the tune of *Red Wing*, a popular dance-number of the day, scandalized many pillars of the church. Foot-tapping ditties were unseemly in the praise of the Lord! They had forgotten, soothed the

preacher, that David danced joyously before the Ark. A tune as good as *Red Wing* must not be left unredeemed in the service of the Devil, must not be played only in places where men and women, God save their sinful souls, danced so close together that a sheet of tissue-paper could not be wedged between them. With holy words, *Red Wing* was sweet music to the ears of the Almighty. I hope the evangelist was right, for *Red Wing* became the revival theme song.

Stuffed with statistics, overflowing with rhythm, still I was unsaved. The evangelist did not fail to locate for me the fiery hell I was headed for, but he did not succeed in giving me courage to turn back to the foot of the platform and openly "make confession". I procrastinated with the hope that I was in good health. But I prayed God to warn me in fair time if I were deceived, if I were doomed to an early death. Whenever they sang *O Why Not Tonight?* I was in agony. What if the Lord should harden his heart against me in my iniquity? What if there should be no morning for me? What if I should wake up roasting in hell? How long was eternity? . . . The meeting closed, the saved were joyously counted; but I was not among them.

III

The Sunday before the next revival, my great-aunt Cleora, rustling in taffeta and fanning the heart disease that had made her sacrosanct for forty years, stood ominously before me as I was leaving church.

"Come with me . . . to my carriage . . . Ken."

I walked beside her, and helped her into her low phaeton. Looking straight over my head, she gasped without preliminaries: "I'm not . . . much longer for . . . this world . . . Ken. I'd like to . . . know . . . before I go . . . I'll meet you . . . over there. You are thirteen . . . now . . . and must . . . know right from wrong. Have . . . you thought of . . . giving yourself . . . to God . . . at the big meeting? I shall . . . pray for you . . . child. Drive home . . . Henry."

A clatter of wheels, and she was gone. I stood trembling where she left me, lost to the after-church chatter on all sides. Give myself to God! The words stripped me bare, invaded the deepest privacy of my life. In unutterable consternation, I knew that the good Lord had sent Aunt Cleora to give me fair warning. I saw my duty clear. But Aunt Cleora's phraseology so hor-

rified me that when I reached home and timidly spoke to my mother, I merely said:

"Aunt Cleora wants me to join the church."

Mother placidly closed the oven-door on a pan of biscuits within, looked at me calmly, and replied:

"I have never talked to you about that, Ken, for I felt when the time came you would do what was right. Don't be disturbed by your Aunt Cleora. Take your time about deciding."

Nothing more was said. But I had no peace of mind. The next day I discovered that three of my playmates were undergoing the same emotional turmoil, and, almost by way of a dare, the four of us agreed to make confession the first Sunday of the revival. Our compact was: "I will if you will. Don't you back out, now!"

That Sunday, I could eat no breakfast. Shame, pure shame, had made it impossible for me to tell my parents, and consequently my mother suspected chills and fever. But she postponed the "course of medicine" until that night, and sent me off to Sunday school.

Thus, before the World War, I learned the meaning of "zero hour". Would the time never pass? Would my three companions fail me, and would I have to walk

down the long aisle alone? Would my legs crumple beneath me before I reached the front row of chairs?

The church service began. The four of us sat together, voiceless during the congregational singing, hearts thumping audibly during prayer. Would the dull pump-pump disturb other worshipers, would the ushers ask us to leave the building? Could I plead sudden illness, and leave the three others to their fate? The surrounding congregation became a dim blur before my eyes. I should faint, I knew, when the moment came.

The sermon! The very nature of it added to my terror, but gave me the desperate courage I needed. The discourse was so scented with brimstone that I realized I was just in time to escape dire eternal punishment. What if I should drop dead before the singing of the invitation hymn? But no. My heart held out noisily, the singing began, and above the voices rose the hypnotic tones of the evangelist, pleading with the lost to beware of trying God's patience, to delay no longer, to accept Christ today.

I forgot my three companions. In a stupor, I rose and staggered into the aisle. Then the four of us were huddled together, hands joined, and advancing almost in a

trot toward the front. The evangelist cried high and loud, "Jesus be praised, these young people have seen the light", and we sank into rickety chairs. The last verse of *Almost Persuaded* was repeated — "for maybe the example of these brave boys and girls will lead others to Jesus, blessed be His name" — the congregation rustled itself into avid attention. The evangelist stood over us, and talked long. I heard no word of what he said until he took my hand, and bade me rise.

"Do you, Ken Campbell, believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and do you accept Him as your Savior?"

"Yes," I whispered.

A few nights later, with other candidates for baptism, I sat in a corner of the warehouse. Before us was a sheep-dip of shining galvanized tin. It was filled with water, and in this we were "to be buried with Christ in baptism". The faithful and the curious,

gathered to see us through the ordeal, sang lustily verse after verse of *O Happy Day*.

A girl just immersed stood for a moment on the top step leading from the sheep-dip. Her dripping clothes clung to her body. As I looked at her, Satan made his first recognizable bid for my immortal soul, and I blushed with shame at the thought that she should have worn her corset. I closed my eyes, prayed for forgiveness, prayed that the waters would wash me clean. Then I stood waist-deep in the water, my eyes raised toward heaven. My mind was swept free of everything but the rhythmic spell of *O Happy Day* and the preacher's words:

"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

I was plunged under, I was raised, half-strangled, to my feet. Slowly I began the ascent out of the water.

Thus was I saved.



HERO OR HACK ?

THE MERCURY presents herewith two somewhat different reactions to the recent passing of Joe Robinson, the Senator from Arkansas. The first, by Mr. Mencken, appeared in the pages of the distinguished Baltimore Evening Sun, at somewhat greater length. The second, plus several more stanzas, graced the columns of the celebrated North Little Rock (Ark.) Times. It was written especially for the Times by former State Senator Paul R. Grabiell. We offer these two pieces to our readers as AMERICANA, and with the feeling that there may be a lesson in them somewhere.

I. SEMPER FIDELIS

By H. L. MENCKEN

WHEN in response to a natural law which even the wizards in Washington hesitate to monkey with, an American politician is summoned to bliss eternal, the newspapers always print editorials allowing politely that he was a statesman. This has been done of late in the case of old Joe Robinson. There is seldom any objective justification for such post-mortem anointings, and this time there has been none whatever. Old Joe, in fact, was no more a statesman than I am an archbishop. He was, from end to end of his forty years at the public teat, a politician pure and

simple, and he was nothing else.

I use the word in its sorriest sense. I mean by a politician a man who is willing to sacrifice anything at any time, including especially truth, justice, dignity and candor, to get and hold a job. The definition, it will be observed, excludes honest idiots, frenzied fanatics, and the whole confraternity of jitney messiahs. It includes only men who know better, but do worse. In that shabby company old Joe was always a shining light, and toward the end of his days he was its recognized grand master in the Republic.

During his time of leadership in the Senate two great inventions for curing all the sorrows of mankind were debated on the floor. One was Prohibition and the other was the congeries of frauds and imbecilities called the New Deal. Old Joe believed in neither of them. All his instincts were against them, and as a highly practical man he knew that neither could possibly work. Yet he voted for both, and not only voted for them but whooped and howled for them. Never did he make more impassioned speeches than when he arose in advocacy of these quackeries that he knew to be the contrivances of fools and the false-faces of scoundrels.

His dealings with Prohibition offer an epitome of his whole career in politics. He was well aware that it was silly and dishonest, and he was never for an instant a personal dry, but when, on August 1, 1917, the Anti-Saloon League brought its blunderbusses to bear upon the Senate, he voted for the Eighteenth Amendment with a resounding aye. And when, on October 8, 1919, the Volstead Act came up, he voted aye again.

It is a curious fact of history, now unhappily forgotten, that President Woodrow Wilson ve-

toed the Volstead Act. This was on October 27, 1919. Under cover of that august disapproval, old Joe saw a chance to disclose his true sentiments, and when the Senate, on October 28, joined the House in overriding the veto, he voted no. It seemed safe at the moment, with Wilson on his side.

But it didn't take him a week to discover that he had slipped into mortal error. The Anti-Saloon League beat Wilson hands down, and went on its way triumphant, and thereafter, for nine long years, not a whisper against it came out of the gentleman from Arkansas. Prohibition was before the Senate, in one or another of its obscene phases, almost daily, but never did he slip again. Always, by word and vote, he was for it.

When he began to wobble at last, it was not principle that fetched him, but simply the heady stench of another and better job. On June 29, 1928, the Democrats at Houston nominated him for the Vice-Presidency, with the ultra-wet Al Smith in first place on the ticket. It was an incongruous and even ludicrous combination—the sidewalks of New York teamed with the swamps of Arkansas, Holy Church wooing the alarmed Baptists of the Hookworm Belt, the frankest politician in America

hitched to the cagiest and most politic.

On November 6, 1928, Hoover carried 40 States and Al and Joe carried 8 — and bright and early the next morning Joe was dry again. On February 19, 1919, when the Jones Five-and-Ten Act came up in the Senate he voted aye with loud hosannahs. And so for four long years more. He continued faithful to the Anti-Saloon League, in fact, to the moment the Democratic National Convention at Chicago ran amuck and began bellowing for beer. The Hon. Franklin D. Roosevelt, who had been dry too, joined this bellowing, and so did old Joe. On February 16, 1933, he rounded out his statesmanlike career on the issue by voting for the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment.

Whether his record on the New Deal would have matched, in the long run, his record on Prohibition no man can now say, but there is certainly plenty of reason for guessing that it would. It had been increasingly difficult for him, of late, to conceal his disgust with the whole More Abundant Life swindle. He was still its spokesman on the floor of the Senate, and he roared and sweated for it every day, but everyone knew that he was in the forefront of the opposi-

tion to it behind the arras, and the only question in doubt was whether he would ever summon up courage enough to denounce it in the open.

He was dissuaded, according to those in daily contact with him, largely by his somewhat pathetic desire to be appointed to the Supreme Court and wear a black robe. That he had any qualifications for the high office of a justice thereof does not appear in the record. His support of the scheme to pack the Court could never have been sincere. In fact, he often disclosed his secret dislike of it while publicly defending it, and he was more responsible than anyone else for the sorry compromise that was before the Senate when he died, and that finally wrecked the whole scheme. What the persons who saw him every day thought of his private inclinations on the court issue is shown by the fact that Capitol Hill opinion was divided between those who believed that, if appointed to a justiceship, he would go on trailing with the New Deal, and those who believed he would desert it. There were obvious doubts about the matter at the White House, and it was common report in Washington that the hon. gentleman's promotion would depend upon the zeal with

which he supported what remained of the court plan. In other words, it would depend upon the extent to which he so enmeshed himself in the New Deal nonsense that retreat later on would be impossible, even to a politician.

This, then, was the Senator who is now described as a statesman. Applied to him, the word ceases to

have any rational meaning. He was a party hack, and no more—a diligent and loyal one, to be sure, and, within the limits of his peculiar code, an entirely honorable one, but still only a party hack. A few more Robinsons in high places, and the democratic process of government will be reduced at last to complete and intolerable absurdity.

II. JOSEPH TAYLOR ROBINSON

FROM THE NORTH LITTLE ROCK *Times*

Home on his shield our hero
comes—

Mute now the trumpets, ruff the
drums!

Breast to the foe our warrior fell,
Through his hills our dirges swell!

Splendid he was at battle's crest—
Here 'neath the oaks he finds his
rest.

Well did he serve us—well and
long—

Out of our grief must rise our song.

Through rolling drums his voice
was heard;

His was the clarion, his the word,
Timely and true, that gaged the
fight—

Sweet may he rest, O kindly night!

So may we now uplift our praise
For the high meaning of his days;
For his great powers, his spirit
brave,

For all the gifts his labors gave!

Gave to our eyes a larger view;
Gave to our lives a rhythm new;
Gave to the State, whose love he
earned,
Greatness a grateful Nation
learned.

Grant in Valhalla he may wake
There with the brave its joys to
take!

Grant that at last our paths may
wend,
There in its shades to find our
friend!

DEATH FROM THE SOIL

By PAUL B. SEARS

THE suicide of a nation is not always an obvious or even wholly unpleasant process. In fact, it is often disguised in a sort of extraneous magnificence that quite conceals what is going on. It can happen in many ways, but none more deadly than the insidious destruction of the soil.

Every continent bears some scars of vanished splendor as testimony to this fact. In Asia and Africa the cultural deserts have grown like a vast and lethal ringworm. The great cities of the Maya in Yucatan have become choice food for the smothering jungle. And if we look behind the restless surgings of our own American people, we will find back of them more of stern outward compulsion and less of burning inward glory than is recorded in the books. Fools that we are, we picture ourselves as moving about the land making everything snug as we go, and leaving one spot only when a better opportunity opens elsewhere. But we would be more honest if we compared ourselves to those African ants which march

about in hordes, picking the country clean as they move.

Within the past twenty-four hours I have learned of a county, the size of a principality, whose population is now one-fourth what it was less than five years ago. One of our younger States has witnessed the destruction of its soil at a rate exceeding one per cent a year, and it is a modest estimate which places the national loss from this source at forty per cent on an average, the country over. The Indian had lived here perhaps thirty centuries and the soil was as good when it passed from his hands as when he took it over. Under his régime, the continent was healthy; under our touch, it has become diseased.

Already the earned standard of living of the average American farmer has slipped behind that of the European peasant. And while we have been throwing away the very means of our livelihood, the thrifty peoples of Western Europe have been laboriously and expensively repairing the mistakes of their forebears. Today their soil is

so productive that they need no longer depend upon us as they once did. Thus, the fate of great cultures of the past is no hazy threat of our remote future; it is a living reality of the present. Every abandoned field and farmstead, every advance in the cost of lumber or food or textiles to the city man, every additional mouth that goes on Relief in this land of potential plenty, is an indisputable, if molecular, proof of that fact. We are headed at full speed on a path that has brought destruction to others as well-meaning and as energetic as ourselves.

The soil is our national meal-ticket. It is also a marvelous and intricate phenomenon which the ordinary person understands about as well as a Colonial barber understood the germ theory of disease. Soil is truly a measure of abundance, so far as living things are concerned. This fact is as vital to the city dweller as to the farmer, and as important to big business as to the rural banker. Or putting it more bluntly, the soil is our greatest commercial asset. But where, in God's name, are our brains?

Too long have we been accustomed to think of soil — if we gave it any thought — as merely a chemical mixture whose properties could be duplicated as the sagacious chemists of the last century learned

to duplicate the waters of the famous European spas and sell the results with a clear conscience and vast profit to the American public. Actually, while soil chemistry is important, it no more tells the complete story than when one describes an automobile by giving the percentages of steel, copper, rubber, wood, paint, and glass which go into it. In the machine, these substances do not function until they are organized. And like the machine, the soil has properties which can be acquired only by organization — with the sun supplying the energy and living plants and animals doing the work. In fact any continent, left to its native plants and animals, is like a storage battery "on the line". The dark upper layers of the soil become a vast accumulator. Is it any wonder that the plowman who breaks the virgin sod riots in its fatness? Or that, in a newly opened State, the talk all ran to words like "boundless, unlimited, inexhaustible", until one of the experiment station staff broke forth in warning as bitter as it was futile?

We are a highly scientific people; we make our physicians scrub before they operate and we do not try to dial our radios until they are plugged into an electric circuit; we even license all sorts of technical

functionaries, to be certain they understand simple rudiments of scientific cause and effect. But anyone can tamper with the soil which keeps us alive.

II

Our very words for the primeval — “wilderness”, “jungle”, “desert” — all suggest disorder, confusion, and futility. The truth is that civilization produces a sort of astigmatism among its members. The primitive man lives in close and immediate touch with nature and never forgets that he is dependent upon her for the necessities of life. His understanding of nature led to agriculture and the domestication of animals. Whereupon fewer people could produce sufficient food for all, and from the resultant leisure, civilization arose.

The country made the town possible, and supplied it with the necessities of existence. It still does, but the fact is largely ignored. The great city has become the nerve center, and the individuals who compose it are so absorbed by their immediate surroundings and so remote from the source of food and raw materials that the problems of production are seldom considered. Civilization leaves to the farmer, the miner, and the woods-

man the business of working with nature direct. The cities are vocal, the rural districts largely inarticulate. And thus it has happened, not once but many times in history, that the center of cultural gravity shifts far from the problem of the soil and all that it implies. Caesar Augustus had this happen in his day, and he saw that it was wrong. So he welcomed the aid of two of the best publicists any government ever had, gentlemen named Vergil and Horace, respectively. These two men sang of the soil and the life of those who lived upon it as only great poets can sing what is profoundly true.

But even these men could not stem the tide, although their influence filtered down through the ages in the well-kept monastery farms and perhaps among the illiterate peasantry in parts of continental Europe. In fact, the sound and thrifty farming traditions of Teutonic peasantry are responsible for the few areas in the United States which have been utilized rather than exploited. But these areas are the exception, not the rule, for the United States began as a British colony just about the time that British farming was due for a complete overhauling. The rural gentry who settled the South-

ern States were not much more land-wise than the artisans and businessmen who settled in the North. Nor indeed, with the expanse and fertility they found, was there much apparent need for care.

It is not too much to say that in the Northern States, industrial and commercial genius was the ruling force. This meant that from the start, even with most of the population on farms, the city became the focus of activity. Men farmed so they could send their sons into professional or business life. In the South, industrialized farming became exceedingly profitable, the small subsistence farmer being relegated to the least desirable land. Farming for cash crops is always hazardous, but particularly so in the absence of diversification. And thus, while the gentlemen-farmers of the South took a genuine interest in their land, it was gone before they knew it, in many places. The yeomanry never had a chance to develop good farming practice, being without proper schools or desirable sites for permanent farming. Their descendants are the splendid mountain whites and the not-so-splendid poor white sharecroppers of today.

In places, for example the Dutch and German settlements in eastern

Pennsylvania, the Swedish settlements in Delaware, and even English settlements in parts of rural New England, farming was cherished for its own sake, as a noble way of life. In a noted German community of the Carolina Piedmont, the cancer of soil erosion, which has consumed the land about, has scarcely crossed its boundary. On the Eastern Shore of Virginia, where live some of the most superbly skillful farmers I have ever seen—of English descent—they have learned by the sacrifice of the original fertility of their soil what their Teutonic cousins knew by apprenticeship and tradition.

Nevertheless, we may say that the westward march of the European across North America retained much of the original character which marked the first settlements. In the Northern States, the emphasis was on industrial development, with urban life as the highly-prized goal. In the Southern States, the application of industrial methods to farming resulted in the one-crop, cash-crop system, perilous to landlord and tenant alike, and swiftly ruinous to land. In the South, the cities were rather an appendage to living than the center of it; but the Civil War settled that issue in favor of the cities,

leaving control in the industrialized centers. Farm life was doomed to evil days, but not so long as there was fresh land to the westward.

An important adjunct to farming from the seaboard well into the Middle West was the forest. This was unquestionably the most magnificent, priceless growth of hardwoods known to man in historical times. Toward the south it gave way to pine and cypress, northward to the trees of the Canadian evergreen forest, but the main bulk of it was splendid hardwood. It was an expression of ample rainfall, but not always of soil suited to agriculture. Yet, regardless of ultimate utility, the soil was everywhere methodically stripped of trees, faster than the market could absorb the lumber, and far faster than nature could replace the vanished growth. And upon the land so cleared, farming was attempted. If it failed, the land was allowed to revert to pasture; if too poor for pasture, the woods reclaimed it, but usually not until after the original thin soil had been washed away. The whole enterprise was conducted with no more order or forethought than a children's raid on the jam cupboard. What should have been an ample supply of fine timber in perpetuity was destroyed. And with it went, through lack of

proper land-use and management, a high proportion of the virgin soil. For authorities are agreed that, whatever the faults of the American Indian, he turned over to us a continent whose soil was practically undamaged.

Nor must we forget that in destroying this soil we let ourselves in for troubles other than agricultural decline. The dark, top layer of virgin soil, rich in absorptive organic matter, is a prime factor in restraining the destructive hand of flood. Ground deprived of this protection loses water from ten to thirty times faster than it did before. When it comes to flood control, the soft and sponge-like humus is as staunch an ally as hard walls of concrete. Floods we always have had, and always will; and any man who builds within the immediate valley of the river is taking a chance. But the fact that floods are more frequent today, more destructive, and higher than ever, should lead us to suspect the truth — trouble starts mainly at the point where the rain falls. The topsoil and its covering of vegetation no longer stand guard for us. Instead, our great river cities bear the direct impact of rushing waters.

But suppose we move westward from the melancholy scene of forests despoiled. Here the great prai-

ries of tall grass abounded, and on beyond them, where the rainfall averaged less than twenty inches a year, the high plains covered with short grass reached to the foot of the Rockies. So little did our elders understand the grassland that they sometimes lumped it all together as the "Great American Desert"; and even the thrifty Norwegians who settled in Iowa picked the woods along the creeks in preference to the grassy uplands.

Eventually, however, the truth dawned. Tall grass prairie has the deepest, richest, blackest soil in the world and is a wonderful place to grow grain in the North, cotton in the South. And be it said that the grain-belt farmer has taken his task seriously. The art of agriculture is no laughing matter in Iowa, Nebraska, and Kansas. Yet in spite of this fact there is probably not more than one-fifth of the soil in the prairie region which has not been seriously damaged by erosion — perhaps one-third of it very seriously indeed. Many reasons are involved — speculation, inexperience, the draining of owners into the towns among them. In particular, the prairie itself went the way of the forest before it. And the prairie, adjusted to the climate, not only holds and builds the soil, but is a sure source of income and a vital

adjunct to farm lands when properly used.

Even the short-grass plains west of the prairies, ideal for well-managed cattle-raising if held in large units, felt the point of the plow, especially after 1914. But the continental dust-storms of the past several years are eloquent proof of the danger of that sort of enterprise in the face of recurrent drouth — a normal feature of the plains. Today the high plains face a long period of beating back toward some form of considered land-use and management, adjusted to their unique climatic hazards. And in that struggle the old license of an owner to do as he pleases with his own land will have to go by the board, for a farm with drifting soil is a menace to its neighbors. Even the businessmen in cities some two hundred miles from the "Dust-Bowl" are affected and are lending their help to solve the problem. We are finding that the landscape is like the human body. You cannot decide to ignore what happens to any part of it and expect the rest to continue in a state of health.

III

Soil and water are accurate measures of the abundance of life. In a sense, the relationship of the two is

a sliding one, for the scarcer the one, the greater the need for the other. Moderate rainfall is far more effective upon a good soil than upon a poor one; and the harder the environment, the greater our responsibility to conserve its resources. We have mentioned the curse of flood and of drouth, but we have said nothing about another and equally-grave aspect of the water problem. To tell the truth, North America, like other continents before it, is drying out. This is no prophet's gabble of changing climate. I am talking about the dry watercourses of Summer which used to run limpid throughout the year; about springs now dry and ponds that have vanished; and in particular about the fact that men must dig deeper — often far deeper — than did their grandfathers in order to find living water. With that fact salted away, let us remember that at least fifty per cent of the people of the United States are dependent upon well water. Let us also recall that crops depend for their success largely upon the water in the ground at the beginning of the growing season. Then we may appreciate better what is happening to us.

The topsoil no longer holds water as it did, permitting it to soak slowly downward. And in addi-

tion, society charges its engineers to get water out of the way and out of sight as fast as they can. They have obeyed orders, as they always do. In place of the old meandering streams and tributaries, with slopes of grass or trees, there are countless miles of roads and ditches which rush the water down and away — a new drainage pattern, completely. Is it any wonder that our ground water swirls off to the ocean and our farm land cushions the deltas?

Everywhere men and women are awakening to these facts. But everywhere is the pathetic response: "Why doesn't the government do something?" Yet what is the government but the people working in organized groups? The experts of the government have been pleading until their voices are hoarse, since the 'Seventies. Administrations from that of Washington down to the present have been concerned. But always has come inertia, even the back-pull of the common citizen clamoring for his share of the velvet while the getting is good. Until chambers of commerce, industrial associations, and other civic bodies have the sense to see that they are in the same boat with the farmer, all the legislation in the world is not going to turn the trick.

And even here, let us not deceive ourselves about the current clamor regarding conservation and the appearance of some really excellent legislation. No enthusiasm or regulation is going to be any more effective than the functional machinery of American civilization wills.

As one who has been working upon this assumption, let me say that the most enlightened help in sight comes from those groups which must think in terms of profit over long periods of years. There is more than a little likelihood that their intelligence may be paralyzed by the much larger group whose insistence is now, as it always has been, upon immediate

profit, without thought of the future.

There is no more ribald humor in the world today than that which designates ours as a capitalistic economy. We do not know what capital wealth is when we have it in our grasp. Nor will we have our real capital long at the present rate. Looking into the future I can even forecast a transaction between the white man and his red brother. Once more the property is Manhattan—but this time with the hinterland included. Once more the cash involved is twenty-four dollars. But I am a bit hazy as to whether that represents the top bid of a drunken Indian, or a bonus offered to one who is cold sober.



OUR ENEMY, THE CAT

By ALAN DEVOE

WE TIE bright ribbons around their necks, and occasionally little tinkling bells, and we affect to think that they are as sweet and vapid as the coy name "kitty" by which we call them would imply. It is a curious illusion. For, purring beside our fireplaces and patting along our back fences, we have got a wild beast as uncowed and uncorrupted as any under heaven.

It is five millennia since we snared the wild horse and broke his spirit to our whim, and for centuries beyond counting we have been able to persuade the once-free dog to fawn and cringe and lick our hands. But a man must be singularly blind with vanity to fancy that in the three—ten?—thousand years during which we have harbored cats beneath our roof-trees, we have succeeded in reducing them to any such insipid estate. It is not a "pet" (that most degraded of creatures) that we have got in our house, whatever we may like to think. It is a wild beast; and there adheres to its sleek fur

no smallest hint of the odor of humanity.

It would be a salutary thing if those who write our simpering verses and tales about "tabby-sit-by-the-fire" could bring themselves to see her honestly, to look into her life with eyes unblurred by wishful sentiment. It would be a good thing—to start at the beginning—to follow her abroad into the moonlight on one of those raw Spring evenings when the first skunk-cabbages are thrusting their veined tips through the melting snow and when the loins of catdom are hot with lust.

The love-play of domestic creatures is mostly a rather comic thing, and loud are the superior guffaws of rustic humans to see the clumsy fumbling antics that take place in the kennels and the stock-pen. But the man had better not laugh who sees cats in their rut. He is looking upon something very like aboriginal passion, untainted by any of the overlaid refinements, suppressions, and modifications that have been acquired by most of

mankind's beasts. The mating of cats has neither the bathetic clumsiness of dogs' nor the lumbering ponderousness of cattle's, but—conducted in a lonely secret place, away from human view—is marked by a quick concentrated intensity of lust that lies not far from the border-line of agony. The female, in the tense moment of the prelude, tears with her teeth at her mate's throat, and, as the climax of the creatures' frenzy comes, the lean silky-furred flanks quiver vibrantly as a taut wire. Then quietly, in the Spring night, the two beasts go their ways.

It will be usually May before the kittens come; and that episode, too, will take place secretly, in its ancient feline fashion, where no maudlin human eye may see. Great is the pique in many a house when "pussy", with dragging belly and distended dugs, disappears one night—scorning the cushioned maternity-bed that has been prepared for her—and creeps on silent feet to the dankest cranny of the cellar, there in decent aloneness to void her blood and babies. She does not care, any more than a lynx does, or a puma, to be pried upon while she licks the birth-hoods from her squirming progeny and cleans away the membrane with her rough pink tongue.

A kitten is not a pretty thing at birth. For many days it is a wriggling mite of lumpy flesh and sinew, blind and unaware, making soft sucking noises with its wet, toothless mouth, and smelling of milk. Daily, hourly, the rough tongue of the tabby ministers to it in its helplessness, glossing the baby-fur with viscid spittle, licking away the uncontrolled dung, cleaning away the crumbly pellets of dried blood from its pointed ears. By that tenth or fourteenth day when its eyes wholly unseal, blue and weak in their newness, the infant cat is clean to immaculateness, and an inalienable fastidiousness is deep-lodged in its spirit.

It is now—when the kitten makes its first rushes and sallies from its birthplace, and, with extraordinary gymnastics of its chubby body, encounters chair-legs and human feet and other curious phenomena—that it elicits from man those particular expressions of gurgling delight which we reserve for very tiny fluffy creatures who act very comically. But the infant cat has no coy intent to be amusing. If he is comic, it is only because of the incongruity of so demure a look and so wild a heart. For in that furry head of his, grim and ancient urges are already dictating.

Hardly larger than a powder-puff, he crouches on the rug and watches a fleck of lint. His little blue eyes are bright, and presently his haunches tense and tremble. The tiny body shivers in an ague of excitement. He pounces, a little clumsily perhaps, and pinions the fleeting lint-fleck with his paws. In the fractional second of that lunge, the ten small needles of his claws have shot from their sheaths of flesh and muscle. It is a good game; but it is not an idle one. It is the kitten's introduction into the ancient ritual of the kill. Those queer little stiff-legged rushes and prancings are the heritage of an old death-dance, and those jerkings of his hind legs, as he rolls on his back, are the preparation for that day when—in desperate conflict with a bigger beast than himself—he will win the fight by the time-old feline technique of disembowelment. Even now, in his early infancy, he is wholly and inalienably a cat.

While he is still young he has already formulated his attitude toward the human race into whose midst he has been born. It is an attitude not easily described, but compounded of a great pride, a great reserve, a towering integrity. It is even to be fancied that there is something in it of a sort of

bleak contempt. Solemnly the cat watches these great hulking two-legged creatures into whose strange tribe he has unaccountably been born—and who are so clumsy, so noisy, so vexing to his quiet spirit—and in his feline heart is neither love nor gratitude. He learns to take the food which they give him, to relish the warmth and the comfort and the caresses which they can offer, but these profferments do not persuade his wild mistrustful heart to surrender itself. He will not sell himself, as a dog will, for a scrap of meat; he will not enter into an allegiance. He is unchangeably and incorruptibly a cat, and he will accommodate himself to the ways and spirit of mankind no more than the stern necessity of his unnatural environment requires.

Quietly he dozes by the fire or on a lap, and purrs in his happiness because he loves the heat. But let him choose to move, and if any human hand tries to restrain him for more than a moment he will struggle and unsheath his claws and lash out with a furious hate. Let a whip touch him and he will slink off in a sullen fury, uncowed and outraged and unrepenting. For the things which man gives to him are not so precious or essential that he will trade them for his

birthright, which is the right to be himself — a furred four-footed being of ancient lineage, loving silence and aloneness and the night, and esteeming the smell of rat's blood above any possible human excellence.

He may live for perhaps ten years; occasionally even for twenty. Year after year he drinks the daily milk that is put faithfully before him, dozes in laps whose contours please him, accepts with casual pleasure the rubbing of human fingers under his chin — and withdraws, in every significant hour of his life, as far away from human society as he is able. Far from the house, in a meadow or a woods if he can find one, he crouches immobile for hours, his lithe body flattened concealingly in the grass or ferns, and waits for prey. With a single pounce he can break a rabbit's spine as though it were a brittle twig. When he has caught a tawny meadow-mouse or a mole, he has, too, the ancient cat-ecstasy of toying and playing with it, letting it die slowly, in a long agony, for his amusement. Sometimes, in a dim remembrance from the remote past of his race, he may bring home his kill; but mostly he returns to the house as neat and demure as when he left, with

his chops licked clean of blood.

Immaculate, unobtrusive, deep withdrawn into himself, he passes through the long years of his enforced companionship with humanity. He takes from his masters (how absurd a word it is) however much they may care to give him; of himself he surrenders nothing. However often he be decked with ribbons and cuddled and petted and made much over, his cold pride never grows less, and his grave calm gaze — tinged perhaps with a gentle distaste — is never lighted by adoration. To the end he adores only his own gods, the gods of mating, of hunting, and of the lonely darkness.

One day, often with no forewarning whatever, he is gone from the house and never returns. He has felt the presaging shadow of death, and he goes to meet it in the old unchanging way of the wild — alone. A cat does not want to die with the smell of humanity in his nostrils and the noise of humanity in his delicate peaked ears. Unless death strikes very quickly and suddenly, he creeps away to where it is proper that a proud wild beast should die — not on one of man's rugs or cushions, but in a lonely quiet place, with his muzzle pressed against the cold earth.

OUR "LIBERAL" WEEKLIES

BY HAROLD LORD VARNEY

THERE is clucking and feather-pulling these days in the dove-cotes of American Liberalism. Trotskyism belabors Stalinism in the quivering columns of the weeklies which are purportedly non-Communist. Heywood Broun, infuriated at a *Nation* which gives only ninety-five per cent allegiance to the CIO, deserts to a *New Republic* whose batting average is one hundred. Oswald Garrison Villard, increasingly at variance with his brethren since his mutiny on the Roosevelt court-packing plan, is dropped from the *Nation's* editorial board to the obscurity of a column on the magazine which his fortune created. Sulphurous recriminations choke the atmosphere. The Liberal "United Front" is disintegrating before our eyes.

But the wonder is that the Liberal crack-up did not come long ago. For American *Liberalism*, since the passing of Woodrow Wilson, has been a misnomer. Its name has long ceased to betoken the doctrinal descendants of Bentham or Burke or Jefferson: it has become a

promiscuous catch-all for the fifty-seven varieties of American Radicalism. The traditional philosophy of capitalism, it has for years been anti-capitalistic. The creed of personal liberty, its spokesmen have attached themselves unquestioningly to the authoritarian il-Liberalism of the Roosevelt New Deal. The advocate of pacifism, one of its largest factions now proclaims that it will become militaristic in the event of a "capitalist war" against Marxian Russia. The voice of political reasonableness, it has abandoned conciliation to join in hosannahs over the direct action of John L. Lewis. The paradox has confronted us of il-Liberal extremism, urged on and applauded by the whole camp of self-proclaimed Liberals. It is a spectacle from Bedlam.

Nowhere has this stultification been more painfully apparent in recent years than in the two recognized Liberal weeklies — the *New Republic* and the *Nation*. Vying with each other for the support of the Left intelligentsia, they have

often seemed to be in competition for the dubious honor of the first arrival in Moscow. It is possible to trace the retreating steps of American Liberalism through the years of the post-war period in the red-dening policies of these two publications. Their role has been central in all the backings and fillings of the Left intelligentsia. Their columns have mirrored the metamorphosis which has transformed the erstwhile disciples of Wilson and Jefferson into incense-bearers at the shrine of Marx. A brief glance at their careers will throw a revealing light upon the causes of their present futility.

II

The *New Republic*, now little more than an organ of neo-Marxism, presents the stranger anomaly of the two. The absurdity of its war against capitalism is accented by the fact that, from the outset, it has paid its printer through subsidies from the Willard D. Straight fortune, earned in the service of the House of Morgan.

Whether Straight, had he lived, would have permitted the present Stalinism of his editors, is an interesting conjecture. Fortunately for the brain trust, Mrs. Straight (now Mrs. Leonard K. Elmhirst) has

continued her first husband's Maecenas help during the nineteen years since his passing, without restraint upon editorial policies. Today, Bruce Bliven and George Soule shape the *New Republic* attitudes with an authority which few non-owning editors have ever possessed. Its anti-capitalism is the reflection of the romantic revolutionary moonings of these two editorial soothsayers.

How far the *New Republic* has drifted from its original moorings may be seen from its brilliant early numbers. Initially, it was the brain-child of Straight and Herbert Croly — a monument to one of the strangest intellectual affinities of our times. Straight, cut off from Occidental intellectual companionship in China for many years — first as a diplomat and later as a negotiator of Morgan loans — happened upon a copy of Croly's *Promise of American Life*. It is difficult now to understand the impact of this ephemeral book (its sale never exceeded 7500 copies) upon the mind of a successful Wall Street financier. But Straight, under his go-getter exterior, had repressed a lifelong yearning for social service which was awakened by the idealistic throb of the Croly volume. Returning later to America, he hunted up the obscure au-

thor and enlisted him in a campaign to modernize democracy. Out of a series of conferences emerged the idea of a magazine of opinion which was to be different from anything ever before attempted in America—a theoretical laboratory for American statesmanship which would revitalize democracy by critical analysis. And since the country was then in the Bull Moose epoch, the political trends of the weekly were to march with those of the Progressive movement of Theodore Roosevelt.

With the Straight purse behind him, Croly succeeded in rounding up a group of stellar young editors. When we mention the names of Walter Lippmann, Francis Hackett, Walter E. Weyl, Philip Littell, and Alvin Johnson (added in the second year), the early promise of the magazine may be visualized. The *New Republic*, from the start, affected the air of omniscience which is still its distinguishing manner. In this first period, its politics was frankly derivative from Sidney Webb, Graham Wallas, and other seers of British Fabianism. It sounded American overtones of H. G. Wells and his gradualist, socialized State, and disclosed a fondness for the instrumental approach of Dr. John Dewey. But while it offered nibblings from

each of the contemporary prophets, its early numbers were untouched by the shadow of Karl Marx and his categorical imperatives. It was radically progressive but not revolutionary.

Unfortunately, its appearance had been timed at the worst conceivable moment for a Liberal resurgence. While the first number was still in the labors of make-up, the World War burst upon Europe. Domestically, the war declaration was to sound taps to the interest of Theodore Roosevelt in his Progressive Party, and thus to rob the Crolyites of the one possible leader around whom they might have built a major movement. Croly and Straight thereupon transferred their faith to Woodrow Wilson, and during the early war period, the *New Republic* faithfully reflected the drive of the Wilson mind toward the concept of American intervention “to make the world safe for democracy”. During this neutrality period, Lippmann has since revealed, the policies of the weekly were so gratifying to the British Foreign Office that a propaganda official offered to buy and distribute 50,000 copies of each issue, so long as it continued its anti-Germanism—an offer which the editors righteously rejected. A consequence of

its "force-to-the-uttermost" policy was a short-lived circulation boom during the war when the journal was regarded, mistakenly it now appears, as the inspired mouth-piece of the Administration.

With the return of peace, the magazine found itself facing a complete reconsideration of social alignment. There followed a period of painful irresolution which lasted until after the death of Croly. It parted company with the Wilsonites by enlisting with Borah and Hiram Johnson in the anti-League of Nations fight, and by nominating Herbert Hoover as the Liberal choice for President in 1920. In 1924, it found a new hero in Robert M. La Follette, the elder, and it gave its benediction to all the futile Third Party projects of the Mid-Twenties. It rhapsodized over a whole cycle of "progressive" political corn-cures. A re-reading of the *New Republic* files for the Harding-Coolidge period dis-inters all the discredited theses of a "reformed" and "renovated" capitalism which were later to become the doctrinal bag-of-tricks of the Roosevelt New Deal.

The death of Croly in 1925 brought forward Bruce Bliven as the dominating editorial personality. Bliven's hegemony meant a new ideological direction. Since his

student days at Leland Stanford, where he was an enthusiastic member of the Intercollegiate Socialist Society, Bliven had been a confirmed disbeliever in the capitalist system. Soon, a new ultra-Left policy began to reveal itself in the *New Republic* editorials. While democracy continued to be the shibboleth of every article, capitalism was quietly dropped overboard. At the same time, the contributor list underwent a gradual *Gleichgeschaltung*. Liberal names were replaced by authors of Marxian convictions. Economic articles became the province of George Soule, a confirmed prophet of the "Coming American Revolution". The literary department passed under the rule of Edmund Wilson who, in 1928, was to come out for the Presidential candidacy of William Z. Foster, the Communist. Later, Wilson was to be replaced by the more orthodox Stalinite, Malcolm Cowley. A third accession to the editorial board was the venerable Dr. Robert Morss Lovett, holder of the distinction of membership on the sponsoring committees of more Socialist and Communist causes than any other intellectual in America.

Under such editorial nurturing, the *New Republic* began to blossom with all the familiar Stalinist

and Trotskyite names. Where once the Lippmanns and Hacketts had pontificated, were now the Stalinites — John Strachey, Joshua Kunitz, Edwin Seaver, Isidor Schneider, Granville Hicks, Newton Arvin, Kenneth Burke, Ella Winter, and A. B. Magil — or the Trotskyites — Sidney Hook, Bertram Wolfe, Max Eastman, and A. J. Muste — or the unticketed Radicals — Waldo Frank, Ludwig Lore, Matthew Josephson, Mary Heaton Vorse, Reinhold Niebuhr, Miriam Allen de Ford, and Robert Cantwell. It was a list soon almost indistinguishable from the roster of the *New Masses*.

Early in the Depression, the *New Republic* began openly to proclaim the end of capitalism and the imminence of revolution. If its concept of the future social order was still gaseous — an intellectual Communism of the library rather than a flesh-and-blood Leninism of the class-war front — the reason may be found in the preponderance of intellectuals over wage-earners among 1930 Radicals. The Depression had started the spectacular Leftward swing of the American intelligentsia which was to continue until Edmund Wilson was able to write in 1937 that “half (of the bourgeois literary world) has turned Leftist”. The new recruits

to Marxism brought the variations and the crotchets of all the Radical half-way houses through which they had passed. The confusions of this “I Am Not a Communist, But —” species are all to be found recorded in the stammering editorial pronouncements of the Bliven staff in the closing years of the Hoover Administration.

In 1932, the *New Republic* showed its new revolutionary orientation by endorsing the Presidential candidacy of Norman Thomas, although a minority report of its editors came in for the perennial Foster. But there was to be one more backslide. In 1933, the seers of East Forty-Ninth Street heard the Great Radio Voice, and they began to dream dreams. What captivated them was not so much the fact that this new Roosevelt was putting into effect virtually all the lost causes of Croly’s career, as the further possibility that the New Deal would go beyond these half-way measures to actual Socialism. They saw the “New Social Order” nearing when, in mid-Summer 1933, one of their writers, describing the NRA, was able to exult that now “we have got the bear’s paw in the trap”. Alas for their illusions, General Johnson soon turned out to be a “Fascist”, and their own Donald R. Richberg,

enticed by the aroma of the Supreme Court, became a "renegade". By the time the Supreme Court pronounced sentence upon the NRA, the *New Republic* was already denouncing it with a bitterness rivaling that of the most Tory Republican. Although, in keeping with the "People's Front" strategy, it supported Roosevelt for re-election in 1936, it was with the sour observation that it was a "miscalculation" to assume that the President "represents in general by far the most progressive tendency" as compared with Landon, and that the real reason for Roosevelt support was the fact that the Left-Wingers would be a stronger pressure-group after election if they pooled their votes with the New Dealers than if they splintered between the two Marxian parties.

To give final confirmation of their changed orientation, the editors, on January 23, 1935, published a new credo. Beneath its weasel democratic words, the Marxian spirit is unmistakable. It is a blunt recantation of the twenty-year Liberal policy of the *New Republic* and a definite avowal of a revolutionary position. "Long ago," it declared, "the *New Republic* ceased describing its tendency in economic discussion as a Liberal one." Instead, the magazine has ac-

cepted as "the only other alternative, an advance to collectivism". Frankly facing the implication of these words, it admits that:

Under a socially planned order, controlled by the interests of the masses, we should, in a sense, have the opposite of Liberalism.

Not that the editors intend to abandon the kudos which go with the Liberal name. They propose to be both Liberals *and* revolutionists.

Liberals can even, it seems to us, embrace within their philosophy the process of social change ordinarily called revolution.

Having thus enunciated this preposterous dualism, they go on to define the role of the magazine in the coming epoch of conflict:

We hope to participate, within the ranks of those who believe as we do that capitalism has outlived its usefulness, in the difficult search for objective truth, in the exercise of tolerance toward those who disagree (though not toward their opinions or acts if we believe them wrong), and in the conservation of those precious human values without which any social change would be meaningless.

It is difficult to reach any other conclusion than that, with these smug words, the Blivenites strip themselves of the last tatter of Liberalism. They likewise offer a particularly unsavory exhibition of intellectual dishonesty. Proclaiming objectivity, they admit in the same

passage that they have already anchored themselves to a fixed anti-capitalist belief. Pledging tolerance to their opponents, they exclude from such tolerance both opinions and acts which, of course, embrace every conceivable test of toleration which might arise. They would conserve precious human values, but, as will be shown later, they have tailored all their current policies by the yardstick of the Stalin Party-Line, which, in Russia, has replaced human values by a polity that has degraded humanity into a helpless economic robot. In short, the credo is a *reductio ad absurdum* of both the Liberal and the revolutionary position. And yet it is with this pitifully bemuddled platform that this one-time pulpit of Lippmann and Weyl now sets itself up as the intellectual arbiter of American opinion. Unquestionably, Heywood Broun will feel at home in its columns.

III

The career of the *Nation* has almost paralleled that of the *New Republic*, with a few notable deviations. In a sense, the *Nation* was a second-comer in the field of advanced political opinion. Although founded as long ago as July 6, 1865, it had never enjoyed a Left-Wing

circulation. During the long editorship of Edwin Lawrence Godkin, and to a lesser extent under Paul Elmer More, it was read by a public of intellectual Brahmins who relished it for its urbane if slightly supercilious conservatism. Until 1918, it remained caviar for the general.

Oswald Garrison Villard inherited its ownership with that of the *New York Evening Post*. As long as he retained the newspaper, his interest in this high-brow magazine with its dwindling circulation of under 10,000 was spasmodic. But in the Summer of 1918, he sold the equally unprofitable *Post*, and, wishing to remain in the journalistic field, retained the *Nation* and assumed its editorship. Searching for a public which would multiply its puny circulation, he discovered the new Left-Wing intelligentsia.

What was this new intelligentsia? No true understanding of the vagaries of the post-war *New Republic* and *Nation* is possible without a recognition of the fundamental change in the composition of the American book and magazine buying public which has been taking place since 1900. The mass invasion of the institutions of higher learning by the proletariat, which began in the 1910's, presented American publishers with a new

market. These buyers early indicated their distaste for the inhibited upper-middle-class standards of the old literature. Representing in themselves Pareto's process of the "circulation of the élite", they were conscious of the dynamic character of their age. Racially closer to Europe and its revolutionary politics, they tended toward an international-mindedness outside the American tradition. Since 1917, they have been continuously interested in Soviet Russia.

Even before the War, this new intelligentsia had made its influence felt on such fleeting magazine ventures as Mitchell Kennerly's *Forum*, Max Eastman's *Masses*, and William English Walling's *New Review*. Villard's entrance into the Left-Wing field was timed to catch the first flood of these new buyers, and his circulation shot up rapidly. It was not long before it had passed the circulation of the *New Republic*, an advantage which it has consistently held.

So long as Villard remained the dominating personality in the *Nation*, its general editorial directions were not markedly different from those of the *New Republic*. Both weeklies were strong for "civil liberties" in the strained Roger N. Baldwin sense of the word; both were vehemently pacifist; both

were extremely friendly to Soviet Russia — a friendship which grew more outspoken as Leninism gave way to Stalinism; both became epileptically anti-Fascist with the first appearance of *Il Duce*, and have since indulged in adolescent witch-hunting in an effort to prove that there is a similar Fascist possibility in America; both were vociferously anti-Republican, although their feelings towards the Democrats were almost equally suspicious until Franklin D. Roosevelt waved his New Deal wand; both were strong partisans of Labor — right or wrong. While neither officially joined the war against capitalism until Bliven published his recantation in 1935, the implication of Socialist — even of Communist — convictions was unmistakable in their editorial utterances from 1929 onwards.

Where the *Nation* has differed has been in its unquestionably superior news quality. Villard's training on the *Evening Post* had given him sensitive antennae for news leads. Without alienating the intelligentsia, he produced a sprightly publication which attracted subscribers whom the frigid *New Republic* could never have reached. The vituperative note became more noticeable when Heywood Broun was invited into the *Nation* pages

after his Sacco-Vanzetti feud with Ralph Pulitzer. And with the later addition of the Washington correspondents, Paul W. Ward and Robert S. Allen, to the contributors staff, the *Nation* won the services of two of America's most expert smearers. Against such lapses must be balanced the fact that for fifteen years, Villard kept on his editorial staff the gifted Joseph Wood Krutch, a genuine Liberal, who views the social scene through humanist rather than Marxian glasses, and that Krutch was permitted to publish in the *Nation* his series, "Was Europe a Success?"—one of the most devastating broadsides against the Left of our times. Such an instance of open-mindedness would have been unthinkable in the columns of the post-Croly *New Republic*.

But with the coming of the Depression, Villard found himself facing the same dilemma that was to drive Bliven and Soule into the outright revolutionary position. His once Liberal public was veering sharply to the Left. Technocracy, social planning, and all the crackpot variations of collectivism were haunting the Liberal mind. Like its rival, the *Nation* soon tacked to the new breeze. There were frequent upsets in the editorial family. The orthodox econ-

omist, Henry Hazlitt, departed, while the pro-Communist Maxwell S. Stewart and Max Lerner made their entrance. Its European coverage was turned over to the Stalinite, Louis Fischer. Its Washington reportage was assigned to the Socialist, Paul W. Ward. Its contributor list began to bristle with such Left-Wing names as Harold J. Laski, Benjamin Stolberg, James Rorty, James T. Farrell, Charles R. Walker, Suzanne La Follette, and many of the writers previously noted in the *New Republic*.

Eventually, the Leftward plunge became too rapid for Villard himself. Always an old-fashioned Liberal at heart, despite his genuflections toward Marx, he grew weary of his task. In 1935, the announcement appeared that the *Nation* had a new owner: Maurice Wertheim, Wall Street banker and sponsor of Liberal causes, had purchased the weekly in order to assure its continuance. He had established the "Nation Fund, Inc.", under a directorate consisting of Villard, Broun, Krutch, Miss Freda Kirchwey, and Dr. Alvin Johnson. Villard himself was to remain as a member of the editorial board and as the contributor of a weekly column. The *Nation* seemed headed toward a guaranteed future.

But the new régime was to prove short-lived. Wertheim discovered he had taken over a journalistic cave of the winds. The Communists and the Liberals on his staff were soon in furious conflict. And the President's Supreme Court proposal in 1937 brought the bitterness to a boil. Wertheim was forced to detach himself from his own editors by a public statement criticizing the *Nation* for its apostasy to Liberalism on this issue. Villard in his column was in almost weekly variance with the other editors.

The deadlock ended finally with Wertheim's departure. The veteran staff editor, Miss Kirchwey, in private life the wife of the former Socialist functionary, Evans Clark, now the high-salaried director of the Filene Twentieth Century Fund, appeared surprisingly as the new owner. Miss Kirchwey, who, like Bliven, is an alumnus of the old Intercollegiate Socialist Society, soon ordered a housecleaning. Lerner, Stewart, and Miss Margaret Marshall were retained as editors. Krutch was segregated in the drama editorship. Villard was dropped as editor, but retained as columnist. The *Nation* now stands upon the threshold of a new reign, with the most unitedly Left-Wing body of

editors that have ever shaped its policies.

IV

Thus, by separate voyages, the *New Republic* and the *Nation* have now arrived at a common revolutionary harbor. Divergences of editorial policy there have been, of course, over the years. But it is significant that such differences have been rather of manner and strategy than of social direction. Today, for all practical purposes, both publications are well within the Marxian penumbra. Although the editors angrily deny the imputation, they are pursuing policies which parallel, with almost uncanny fidelity, the official Stalin Party-Line.

Let us glance at a few of their present enthusiasms and apprehensions in the light of their professed Liberalism. We will find that the two magazines have stood as one in the face of every American controversial issue of the last twelve-month, with the single exception of the issue of neutrality. It is ironic to note that in each situation, their reaction has been anti-Liberal.

Nowhere was this il-Liberalism better demonstrated than in their unqualified fight for President Roosevelt's court-packing plan.

Here was obviously an issue on which even New Deal well-wishers might break with the President without disloyalty to his general objectives. It was an acid test of true Liberalism. Sad to relate, both the *Nation* and the *New Republic* collapsed before the test. In the editorial chorus of the *New Republic* there was not even a minority report. In the *Nation*, there was a counter-revolutionary uprising which was repelled by the faithful team of Lerner and Kirchwey. Poor Villard entered his caveat, unheeded. Even the intervention of the ostensible owner, Wertheim, was brushed aside by the Roosevelt-idolizing editors. Wertheim, who had tied his own hands by surrendering full control of the magazine for a stated period to the editors, did not mince words in his dissent. "The *Nation* has lost itself in unjudicial partisanship," he declared. Forgetting its traditional opposition to everything which "even smacks of authoritarianism, it has allowed itself to be caught by the bait of a few immediate laws", he lamented. The reply to both Villard and Wertheim was given with deliberate offensiveness by Heywood Broun in the following issue. "I'm getting a little sick of the *Nation's* policy of fair play," he fumed, after protesting against

the space given to the dissenters. "This isn't an amateur tennis match. It is a fight." That Mr. Broun was a more accurate interpreter of the present *Nation* spirit was soon demonstrated by the exit of Wertheim and the demotion of Villard.

Characteristically, both the *New Republic* and the *Nation* joined voices with the *New Masses* in acclaiming the Supreme Court appointment of Hugo L. Black. Even after the photostatic revelation of Black's Klan membership, the *Nation* dismissed the disclosures as "a trap set by powerful oligarchical minorities", while the *New Republic* actually waved aside the issue by declaring that Klan membership "was much like what joining Rotary or Kiwanis is in some Mid-Western town". That their Left-Wing partisanship is capable even of condonement of Klan membership reveals the distance which the Bliven and Kirchwey weeklies have drifted from their quondam Liberalism.

A similar partisan casuistry was displayed by both publications in the recent Glenn Frank case in Wisconsin. Both magazines have long made a fetish of the issue of "academic freedom" which, they have warned, is menaced by reactionaries. But in Wisconsin, they

encountered a reversal of roles. A university president was being dropped, not because he was a Radical but because he was a Republican. And to make the decision even more painful for the weeklies, the animus behind the dismissal came from the holy La Follette brothers, anointed successors of President Roosevelt in the national Left-Wing leadership. To take a Liberal attitude in such a controversy would tarnish the moral prestige of the La Follettes. Faced by such a Liberal test, both publications foreswore academic freedom and plumped for the La Follettes.

In other recent situations, the parallel between the attitudes of the weeklies and the Stalin Party-Line has been inescapable. Both publications have, of course, been violently partisan in defense of the Communist régime in Spain. Editors Malcolm Cowley and Maxwell S. Stewart have visited the Red areas of Spain and have returned to publish eulogistic articles concerning the Valencia Stalinites. The *Nation* even carries its Franco-hatred into its charities. Although two-thirds of the Spanish noncombatants are in territory ruled by non-Communists, the magazine, in raising a \$25,000 fund for a "Nation's Food Ship", spe-

cifically restricted this benevolence "to aid the noncombatants evacuated from Madrid and the other thousands fleeing from Malaga". In its partisanship for the Spanish Reds, the *Nation* even turned vituperatively upon the hitherto lionized New Deal Governor Earle, when he had the effrontery to halt the exhibition in Pennsylvania of a Communist-produced pro-Valencia picture, one of whose captions openly solicited American enlistments in the Red Army.

In the CIO-A.F. of L. struggle, both *Nation* and *New Republic* have faithfully followed the Party-Line. "In the Labor struggle now being waged, our sympathies are frankly with John L. Lewis and the CIO," declared the *Nation*. To the *New Republic*, the record of the A.F. of L. leaders was "damning" — "their utter inability to understand the crisis that Labor faces, their distortion of values, their picayune jealousy of power". Both publications have been strong for sit-down strikes and for one-sided enforcement of the Wagner Act; while the efforts of employers and non-Lewis employees to defend themselves against CIO terrorism have been "Fascism".

But it is to the sorry record of the weeklies on the Moscow trials that we must turn for the final in-

dication of pro-Stalinism. The trials raised an issue among Radicals which is almost definitive. To approve Stalin's blood-purge is to approve a ruthless factional act which is justifiable only in a mind which accepts the Stalin thesis: approval stigmatizes the sanctioner not merely as a revolutionist—but as a Stalin revolutionist. That this is true is clearly shown by the instinctive horror with which the Moscow incidents were greeted by such non-Stalin Russophiles as Norman Thomas, Dr. John Dewey, John Dos Passos, Benjamin Stolberg, etc. How did our "Liberal" weeklies meet this challenge? It would be inspiring to record that they demonstrated their detachment from Moscow by editorial denunciations of the blood-letting. Unhappily, no such righteous wrath was in evidence. Instead, both publications exhibited an almost unctious concern to palliate if not to justify the atrocities. Unable to defend Stalin overtly in a barbarity which they would have screamingly scourged in Hitler or Mussolini, the editors chose the more dishonest course of non-committance.

Thus the *Nation*, writing of the Tukhachevsky execution, echoed the fantastic Soviet propaganda of German-spy plots by declaring that

"it is not hard to believe that Soviet officers were involved in a plot planned and executed from Berlin". And the *New Republic*, rejecting Trotsky's exposé of the trials, and expressing disinterest in Dr. Dewey's proposal of an impartial public Trotsky trial by Liberals, agreed with the pro-Stalin Walter Duranty's opinion that coercion had not been used in extorting the evidence and that the confessions were true. After the most recent farcical trials, the only editorial comment of the *New Republic* was that a conclusion in regard to the truth and the untruth of the evidence was now impossible, at the same time publishing two lengthy briefs by Cowley which, in substance, sustained all the principal Stalin contentions, including even the preposterous charge of an understanding between Trotsky and Fascism.

V

In the face of such pathetic retreats from Liberal responsibilities when Radical interests are involved, it is ludicrous for the weeklies to persist in further vaunting of the Liberal name. Liberalism, if it is to be anything but a mask for factions, does not authorize deviations for favored nations or parties. Those

who march under its serene name can have no prior loyalties which bind them to authoritarianism. That the *New Republic* and the *Nation*, consciously or unconsciously, have now placed themselves outside the Libertarian pale has been palpable from their illiberal reaction to every testing issue of recent times. Their continued camouflage under the Liberal colors must be regarded as an act of intellectual dishonesty which can deceive only the politically naïve.

Furthermore, it is probably accurate to say that, today, the *New Republic* and the *Nation* are the most effective amateur propaganda adjuncts to the American Communist movement. For the once-Liberal weeklies are, in a sense, the bridge between Communism and the unconvinced intelligentsia. Their 75,000 subscribers, by a process of natural selection, are vocational molders of national opinion. They are teachers, writers, clergymen, professional men and women, social workers—the picked middlemen of American intellectual life. When Bliven or Miss Kirchwey succeed in swinging this strategic mental group to such Party-Line enthusiasms as anti-Francoism in Spain, Blackism in Washington, Lewisism in industry, or anti-Trotskyism in Moscow,

they have made an achievement which the Earl Browders of the Communist Central Committee and the Mike Golds of the *New Masses* are powerless to attempt. They have mobilized disinterested public opinion behind the "Peoples' Front" formation.

And since the line of least resistance, in the present intellectual climate, points Leftward, it is inevitable that the weeklies will continue their goosestep toward the Kremlin. They will be able to do so, under the painless strategy of Peoples' Front Communism, without wrenching loose from any of the bonds which now link them to respectability. With convincing earnestness, they will continue to protest their intellectual integrity, their stern devotion to objective truth, their unswerving loyalty to the genuine Liberal spirit. They will write dithyrambs to liberty, while they urge the Party-Line of liberty's darkest enemies. Even after the Stalinite *coup d'état* has triumphed, we may expect to hear Mr. Bliven and Miss Kirchwey still pedantically explaining that the Communist dictatorship is but an "adult" form of our traditional American democracy. To such futility has the Liberal mind descended in this hour of Liberalism's supreme crisis.

HANG-OVER

A Story

BY PAUL CHALKER

IT SEEMED that both realizations came simultaneously with his awakening: the realization of his condition and the realization of his tardiness. The latter was the stronger. Startled, he hoisted himself quickly to his elbows and looked at the clock. Equally quickly he fell back. Thirty minutes late already. To hell with work.

Then the realization of his condition seized him. He had been drunk last night. From each part of his body came a separate ache to certify that fact. He groaned. His mouth was coated inside with scum, his tongue seemed too heavy to move.

He had been drunk last night. The thought didn't make sense at first. The words, the letters, even the capital and the period, were in his mind, but they meant nothing. He had been very drunk; but his mind must seek helplessly the doom of memory. And with memory came the de-

pressing knowledge of what had happened. It was not memory so much as it was new experience, as if he had suddenly found himself again in the action of the incident.

The image that had brought him memory was of himself, drunk as a coot, making loud rough wet love with his hands and mouth to a strange woman at the party, while a roomful of people watched him be a fool. God, he had been a fool! He had made love to the strange woman while his own girl, the desirable Lucy, in natural resentment, had left him alone. He had done something horrible, and now inexorably his aching brain knew it.

He had hit Lucy. Great God! Lucy! He had slapped her, meanly, in the face; and she had had to be rescued by another man. Memory fell upon him and became horror — horror and self-hate and pain greater than physical. It was not a numbing pain; rather, it opened

each of his nerves to receive and to clasp the agony of his remorse, and it turned his whole body into one organ that screamed at the irrevocability of his deed. Despairingly futile was the impulse to do something, to prove immediately that he would never drink again.

He sat up, but the pain in his head was too much, so determination died. He lay back and lit a cigarette that was tasteless through the mucky taste already in his mouth.

Some silly argument (Lucy had been irritatingly sober) and he had begun to curse her. That was in the main room where most of the people were dancing. She had refused to dance with him. He had been loud. "Shut up!" she had said. Then he had slapped her. The other fellow had shoved him away, and somebody had caught his arms and hustled him outside. He had seen Lucy; she was crying. He had fought with the man carrying him from the room, but he couldn't get away until released outside. Then he had gone back in.

He had loudly proclaimed to the people there his redoubtable ability to pound hell out of one or all of them, singly or together; and he had defied them as loudly to make something out of it. He remembered that about that time he had

taken straight an unreasonably large drink out of a water tumbler—or was it from a bottle? (Now it seemed that his swallowing then had been endless.) But his memory was not sure. . . . There was a fellow he had some grudge against. Meeting that fellow, he had released his grudge wrapped in many oaths; and when ordered to shut up, he had swung at the man. Now it appeared that the swing, in memory lingering and floating gently, had carried him into oblivion; he recalled nothing after it. Knowledge of what had happened, however, was furnished by a sore spot on his chin, together with an alarming noise, and some pain, in his jaws when he opened his mouth. Of how he had got home and got to bed wearing pyjamas, he had no idea whatever.

Drunk, that was it. And he swore. Never, not ever again would he take a drink. He knew that.

Sharply he remembered the time. Jerking into an upright posture, he saw from the clock that he was now forty-five minutes late for work. He came out of bed, cursing. Upon standing he was dizzy, and his stomach leaped violently. From a mirror his eyes stared, gleaming curiously, beyond control. Ugly, weak, foolish—his face: the muscleless face of an

idiot. In the bathroom he vomited long and hard. His body tingled, still affected by alcohol; but soon he felt dully tired, his blood like warm stagnant water; and his head carried the sum of all his physical and mental pain.

He longed for normality, and he tried to achieve it with a cold shower. Then he cleaned his teeth, used mouthwash again and again. Cleanliness, the lovely comfort of cleanliness, was the desire; but he could not clean the dirty horror of his memory. As the water left his skin still feverish, so his search for self-excuse left his memory still insistent with its proofs.

Lucy was lost. She would have no more to do with him, now that he had shown her his weak brutality. She had seen him with the other woman, too. Everybody had. That must have been a sight. They had been as dirty as possible, he and the woman, his hands working unrestrained on her body, her skin like warm wet sandpaper. He sickened at the filth he had wallowed in.

He started for work, but stopped at the drugstore to drink cold milk. It would feel good in his stomach, and aspirin and ammonia might relieve the pain in his head. Nevertheless the picture of the day remained dark: weariness, pain,

and a sick conscience, with nothing but time as a curative.

One consolation occurred to him: he could make it up to himself. He might be unchangeably a fool to the world; but he could, by hard work and abstinence, prove to himself that he was not completely a failure. Immediately he was impatient to get at this rehabilitation and to show at once his real strength and intelligence.

II

At the office he met the boisterous amusement of friends. More than an hour late, and unmistakable in appearance, he was fair game for them. He retired sulkily to his desk, glad only that these people, though they might know he had been drunk, did not know yet the fullness of his disgrace. Then came a heavy hand on his back and a horrible "Hello, Lover!" Well, he had it coming to him.

"Boy, were you on a bat last night!"

"Was I bad?"

"I'll say you were bad! We couldn't do a thing with you. Trying to dance and falling all over the place, until you had to be dragged off the floor. Trying to fight everybody in the place. You were a sight, all right."

"A general nuisance, eh?"

"Yes. Frank wanted to throw you out, but Lucy wouldn't let him."

"What did Lucy say? Was she very mad?"

"She didn't say much. But did she look! She was mad, all right. I heard her say something to Frank about being fooled."

"I was pretty mean to her, wasn't I?"

"You were. And was Frank sore! When he finally socked you, he socked!"

"Who took me home?"

"Frank and Lucy. He didn't want to touch you, but Lucy insisted. You were out cold. The other woman had already been taken home."

"Who was she?"

"Why, that was *the* Cora Sheppard. Boy, did you two put on a show! Nobody could have told you didn't know her. You were both so drunk you couldn't find each other's mouth, but your hands were all right. It looked like you were giving her a bath."

Laughing, the pleasant fellow passed on.

Humiliation is itself a pain, as definite as the toothache, and now he felt it to a superlative extent. His memory of the night before, the ugly picture of him in the

midst of that crowded room, calling the attention of all the people to himself and being a fool for their merriment — this memory cut sharply into his self-respect. He was not like that, he knew. That any man would deliberately put himself into a condition where he had positively no control over what he did was now the silliest thing imaginable. And the incredible fact that he, a human being, with more, he hoped, than the ordinary human being's capacity for exaltation, should prove himself, and in public, the lowest of human imbeciles, and should earn the filth and rottenness of the memory of conduct unbecoming even a human imbecile, slashed his body with the deep pain of helpless remorse. He dwelt upon his defecation, lessening his physical pains in the greater pain of a hurt ego, and contrasting the stupidity with his avowed sensibleness for the future.

The story told by his friend was getting through the office; his name now was Lover. He tried once to bluff it through — little life-of-the-party in person, he was — but he was too sick and too dejected. He removed to himself, and his mind kept him miserable with its melancholy stirring. . . .

Lucy had danced too much with another man — because he

had been too drunk to dance with her. He had followed her, first to mutter his imprecations and later openly to insult her. And hit her. His pain seemed unbearable as he pictured Lucy's horror and grief at his sudden transformation from the man she had liked, and perhaps had loved a little, into a bully.

After the scrap with Lucy he had run across that other woman. God, that woman! Cora Sheppard! Every man in town had had her. She had been drunk, too (he and she were the only drunks at the party), and older, forty at least; and they had put on an exhibition in plain sight of everyone. On the sofa in the main room they had loudly and obscenely necked each other. God! . . .

The day dragged on. Pain persisted and became a part of existence. Work was impossible. The entire day would be wasted; on top of the night's proof of his stupidity, twenty-four hours would be subtracted from his life, as barren as if he had slept through them. That, he guessed, was his life. His pretty dreams of intelligence were destroyed completely; no future seemed left to plan for.

Then the collision of milk and alcohol in his stomach caused cramps, and physical pain again

became greater than mental torture. His stomach might have contained smoldering coals; all his body was caught by the pain. Going into the lavatory, he stuck his finger down his throat.

Afterwards he felt surprisingly better. His stomach was empty and relatively comfortable, and his head ceased to some extent its throbbing. Gingerly he tried cold orange juice. It tasted good and felt better. Soon he was hungry and he ate. It was good and did not seem to hurt him. He was still tired and sore, but the acute painfulness of his condition was receding. From the morbid subject of himself he turned to meditate, comparatively happily, on this curious development. How splendid it was to feel better!

Soon, he felt so much better that his view of the party began to change. Of course he had been a fool — he would not forget that — but after all, anybody was liable to get drunk sometimes. It must have been funny, the way he and that woman had carried on. He had to laugh, and the laughing added to the feeling of renewed health. The others must have stood around and gaped — well, he was glad he had given them a show.

He reveled for a time in his new comfort. Not that he was entirely

well, but the contrast was encouraging. He would not let everything go to waste. Lucy must be won back. It might not be easy, but he could do it. He would never drink again; it was a filthy habit; he would show Lucy that one mistake did not make a fool.

III

The physical relapse came around mid-afternoon. The food he had eaten seemed to ball up inside his stomach and then to try to force its way out. His body succumbed unreservedly to weariness, topped by the reappearance of most of the hang-over pains. But there was no lingering exhilaration now from alcohol; his body was crushed, wrung out, and inconceivably dirty.

This, he vaguely felt, was unfair. He had been led to hope, and even to expect, that the worst was over, and this new ignominy was too much. The necessity for working the specified time, the office noises that seemed to rip his brain apart, the never quiet jibes from silly persons intent on driving him crazy—these inflictions added to his misery and filled his vision. They acquired the halo of injustice, and he slavered over them in his mind, making them fuel for consump-

tion by a bitterness now forming in him. He had been a fool: all right, he had been a fool. That was no reason he should be forever tortured. Controlled by the new emotion, his mind threw odium on everything and everybody; all were in some respect cause for torment; all exerted some force to increase his misery.

The question for the first time that day occurred to him: why had he drunk so much? Ordinarily he did not drink very much. Some, always. He liked the sensation of slight intoxication. It was even necessary sometimes. But his hang-overs were always bad when he drank heavily, and for him the time of drunkenness for smartness had been outgrown. Only some outside compulsion could make him overdrink that way. Something that made him forget. The answer was summed up in one person: Lucy. And so Lucy, too, became the object of resentment. As the afternoon went painfully on, he began to rehearse her defections. Her conduct last night had been irritating from the beginning. She had been cool and distant all along, not at all what their previous relations had led him to expect. She hadn't wanted to kiss; she hadn't wanted to drink; she had coldly condemned his desire

to kiss and to drink. It had been the most infuriating sort of condemnation, too, not vocally specified but indicated by a frigid withdrawal from him; and it had made him mad. He recalled her actions: how she had preferred the other fellow's company to his; how she had openly refused to dance with him; how, finally, she had told him that if he didn't stop drinking she wouldn't go home with him. What right had she to act like that? She had simply been a poor sport; and it had so surprised and angered him that he had drunk more and more, disregarding the effects. . . .

At last he could leave the office. That liberty earlier had promised rejuvenation; now it brought only aimlessness. Nothing to do worth doing; no place to go. His body was a feverish pain; his head a bitter ache.

The chief mood that he now could remember had been one of anger and resentment. If Lucy was going to treat him like that, he would show her! That, he supposed, had been the idea. But it had got away from him. He should have been more careful; no woman was worth making a fool of oneself over. Still, if she had been decent about the thing, if she hadn't been so damned superior and had

done the right thing, and not nagged, he would have stopped long before he passed out.

Passed out! That was what made him sore. Making a fool of himself like that over a woman. The very thing he had sworn always not to do. The flesh pain of humiliation hurt him again. And the woman didn't care a damn about him. She had proved that.

And that crowd. What a crew! If they had been decent, it wouldn't have happened. But no, they egged him on. They wanted to see him drunk. Why, even drunk, he was better than that whole bunch put together!

He knew how to drink. He could drink better than anyone at that party. He had drunk decently and enjoyably with all sorts of people. Decent people who knew the value of drinking. And he would drink again, sensibly. Right now he needed a drink worse than anything in the world. It would put him back on his feet like nothing else. And he would get it. No use letting the opinion of people he didn't care about keep him from being comfortable.

IV

He did get the drink, in a nearby saloon, and sat alone at a table.

He had been bored to death last night. He remembered that now. There was not a single person at the party he could have had a good time with. Even Lucy, who had before seemed like such a person, had proved last night that she was not. He had wandered around, wanting something to do, drinking all the time, and getting madder and madder; while the rest just sat around, Lucy with them, and talked and played bridge like a bunch of old hens. He had had to drink in self-defense. A sight, was he? Well, by God, it was a good thing those deadheads had had a sight to look at.

He needed another drink; he got it.

He liked the idea of having drunk in self-defense. It fitted in with his mood as he now recalled it—a mood of desperation. He simply hadn't cared what happened; anything but boredom. Disregard of effects, of events, of opinions, all backed up by a desire to show that bunch of numbskulls how dead they were. And he had shown them! If he had made a fool of himself, at least it had been by way of doing something, and not, like the others, by way of being scared to do something.

He had not wanted to go to the party anyway. Even before he

started out he had drunk some to get his courage up. He had known those who would be there were not his sort of people. But Lucy had insisted that they go—even when he had told her he didn't want to go.

Lucy, he finally decided, had asked for everything she had got. If she wanted to put on a high hat and pretend to be an angel, she would have to get somebody else to do it with, because he didn't like that kind of stuff. He couldn't pretend. If he didn't like people, he just didn't like them; and if he had to drink to stand them, he drank. He wouldn't pretend to be somebody he wasn't just to make a lot of dead donkeys like him. He didn't want them to like him anyway. Lucy would have to choose between him and them.

One more drink wouldn't hurt him, and then he was going home and sleep for a week.

He remembered the object of his love-making. There was a woman! She knew she had not died yet. He would like to know her. He laughed again at the thought of their performance. They had shown what they thought of the party, all right. She didn't mind making a fool of herself if she had a good time doing it. Like him, she didn't care what

the others thought. But not like Lucy. Not like those other sheep. Too anxious to be well thought-of to let themselves go and have a bit of fun. He and Cora Sheppard knew. Let Lucy run off like a scared biddy if she wanted. Let her go back to her conventional life with the poodles. He could not be bothered any more. He was too busy enjoying life to be tied down like that. Only in the enjoyment of life was there reason, and if in the enjoying of life he did things that caused others to think him a fool,

why, all right, let them think him a fool.

He felt good now, ready to do something. He ordered another drink. He would like to do something. He had had a lousy time last night; he had a good time coming. And he knew where to get it. Lucy was probably playing bridge. Playing bridge! Well, let her play. He would call up Cora Sheppard and do a different sort of playing.

He got up from the table and walked to the telephone.



EDITORIAL

Waving a Bloody Japanese Shirt

BEFORE our readers throw themselves body and soul into a popular crusade against Japan, whether in arms or by boycott, we suggest that they look the situation over calmly and get down to brass tacks about it. To begin with, all literate people can agree that the Japanese armies have acted like scoundrels, and are scoundrels. There can be no question about that, because as everybody knows, *all* armies everywhere are trained to act like scoundrels and are treated as mutineers if they do not. The Japanese are no exception.

So much for our opinion in the matter. But does this opinion stir us to the point of yelling for American soldiery to mess in the Sino-Japanese imbroglio in a "collective effort to restore peace"? It does not. We have seen those Collective Efforts before. We know what they mean, and what sort of people start them, and why, and what comes of them. Moreover, if any people on earth ought to know as much about them as we do, it is the American people generally, for

they cut their eye-teeth on one of those same Collective Efforts less than twenty years ago, and are still holding the bag. We remember well how royally they were sucked in on a gaudy Crusade for the cause of Righteousness, and we also remember who sucked them in, and why, and who got the loot, and who reneged on the bills. So we are not carried away by exhortations towards any more Collective Efforts, and we earnestly counsel our readers to follow our example in meeting these exhortations with a glazed eye and a marble heart. Frankly, we don't like the looks of our exhorters, and we would not trust them ten minutes alone in a room with a red-hot stove. They are now plying the American people with the same old 1917 hooey.

The rank hypocrisy of pretending that moral homilies have any bearing on the facts of the situation should be obvious. The Japanese have been acting like savages, and are savages—but just what have the Japanese done that other nations, our own included, have

not done and would not do again under like circumstances? Nothing we have heard of. Can anyone mention something? Torturing prisoners? Look up the docket of our Indian wars; look up Hell-Roaring Jake Smith and the Filipino water-cure. Raiding civilians? What about the Italian bombers in Ethiopia and the British bombers in India? Making war without a declaration? How much notice was given of Nelson's expedition against the Danes in 1801, or of Britain's war on the Boers? Cruelty to women and children? Look up the fearful record of Kitchener's concentration-camps and the still more infamous record of Britain's post-war blockade of civilian Germany. . . . There is no such thing as Japanese atrocities. They are *military* atrocities; and if and when another major war comes on, you will see every army of every nation concerned behaving precisely as the Japanese are behaving, to the very limit of their opportunities.

Another thing which makes us go slow about working ourselves into a war-fever is the way the wave of popular sentiment against Japan has been managed. Whenever a wave of popular sentiment starts up against somebody, the first thing we American Macaulays

want to know is who is behind it, and why, and what is going to be got out of it, and by whom. It is in this connection that we refer to Dr. Roosevelt's speech in Chicago on October 5, in which he repudiated the policy of neutrality and came out in favor of a Collective Effort to restore peace; that is to say, an effort by the United States, in cahoots with England and France, to put the muzzle on Japan. A day or two afterward, instead of promptly resigning, as good old Bill Bryan had the self-respect to do in a like situation, Cordell Hull obediently followed suit with an official pronouncement denouncing Japan; and on the day we write this, October 8, the Associated Press reports Bro. Hull's agreement to participate in a "conference" on ways and means whereby the Japanese may be duly pried loose from their prey.

Well, all we can say is that if this means war, England and France will once more be the chief beneficiaries of America's prodigal tomfoolery. England and France have their hands too full at home to take on any commitments in the Far East, and it would be a considerable convenience to them to have the American forces step in and clean up for them; and as it happens, practically all the

American Navy is in the Pacific now, and is therefore handy. Again, if the conference means a boycott of Japanese goods, and if such a boycott were enforceable, British trade would profit by it, at least temporarily, almost more than by our going to war; and we would lose money all along the line. But nothing of this interests us especially just now. We are interested only in the American attitude towards Sino-Japanese affairs up to the present day.

The Japanese have been carrying on their highwaymanry for the best part of seven years. Fairly early in the game, Bro. Hull's predecessor, Bro. Stimson, proposed a Collective Effort, but the British were quite thick with the Japanese in 1932, and their Foreign Office left Bro. Stimson out on a limb, looking pretty cheap. Since then, however, the Japanese have simply been raising hell with British trade in the Far East, thereby causing the foundations of the Empire to rock and tremble; and the effect of this has been to pillory the Japanese before all the world as fiends and miscreants, and also to raise a loud bellow for the self-same scheme of a Collective Effort deftly turned down five years ago.

Mr. Hoover went out, carrying the remains of Bro. Stimson's proj-

ect with him in his carpetbag, and the learned Dr. Roosevelt came in; and for five years since that day the Japanese have pursued their devilish aims at high pressure. Has the learned Doctor ever let on that he noticed it particularly? Have his humanitarian impulses ever caused him to foam up and grow emotional about it? Has he ever even paid the tribute of a kindly word to the worth of Bro. Stimson's noble experiment? Not at all. On the contrary he has been decisively, almost ostentatiously, in favor of non-intervention, keeping out 'of other peoples' business, neutrality, abstention from war, and all the rest of it. As regards foreign affairs, his ways were those of righteousness and all his paths were peace. Senator Nye himself could hardly have made a more impressive showing.

Yet on October 5, the good Doctor made such a quick turn on his record that he left the toes of his shoes still pointing in the opposite direction. He hit the sawdust trail away from his professed principles and policies without even the decent formality of pausing a moment at the mourner's bench; he was a lightning-change convert. Now why was this? How did it happen that after sitting in darkness for five long years he so sud-

denly saw the light of grace? Was it because his humanitarian instincts, his delicate sense of international morality, his notable yen for justice and righteousness, all burst loose at once? Here in Connecticut — where we bite every nutmeg twice before buying — we are not so sure. We cannot help remarking that on October 5, the *Doctor Universalis* was on a hot spot. In order to get off it, he had, first, to do something to divert public attention from the execrable part he played in the Black affair. Second, he had to do something to cobble up a considerably damaged prestige. Third, he had to do something to regain his grip on a dissenting and recalcitrant Congress. Very well; in these circumstances is there anything better for a sleazy politician to do than — regardless of consequences — to wave the bloody shirt of foreign affairs? The best answer is found in the eloquent fact that this is what sleazy politicians always do.

While we are not prophesying, we have a vague idea that the Doctor's speech was for home consumption, and that if the boys on the other side of the Atlantic think they are going to get something more substantial than talk out of it, they may find they have another think coming. But we set

no store whatever by that idea. What we set store by at the moment is the certain fact that waving the bloody shirt is an extra-hazardous business, and that a man who will risk doing it at this juncture, or at any juncture, in order to enhance his own prospects, is a disreputable and dangerous man. War or no war, boycott or no boycott — we are not interested in any of these alternatives at present. What interests us just now is to impress our readers with the mighty truth that a politician's principal business is

still further to contract the narrowness of men's ideas, to confirm inveterate prejudices, to inflame vulgar passions, and to abet all sorts of popular absurdities.

Edmund Burke said that, and we humbly beg our readers to memorize it and apply it as a measure of any professional politician's language, whenever one of them opens his mouth on any subject whatever. If they will do this for a year, we believe they will discover that they must go a long way — a very long way indeed — to find a professional politician who would not cheerfully bargain off his country's most vital interests in order to advance his own projects and ambitions, and throw in his risen Lord for lagniappe.

AMERICANA

CALIFORNIA

New light is thrown on an ancient problem by Swami Baird T. Spalding, in the pages of *Mind Magazine*:

We cannot say positively that this is a fact, but we believe that many bodies are reassembled in from one to three hours after the experience of death. We know of a body in India lying on a marble slab with just a little canopy about four feet above it to keep off the rain, and it has been there for 600 years, inactive, but perfectly preserved. It was suggested that this man was actively functioning in another body. We finally came to the place where this man was living with his supposed second body. We took his photograph and compared it with one of the body on the slab. An exact resemblance existed.

STARTLING news note from the Blonde Belt, as released by Hollywood *Talkie-Talk*:

The style designers of Hollywood are embarrassed at the way women's skirts are being shortened. The reason is that many of Hollywood's best-dressed stars lack the proper underpinning for the display of calves.

CONNECTICUT

FURTHER example of New Deal technique is revealed by the rugged Republicans of Wilton:

We now ask the Democrats what assurance have the people of Wilton that Fred E. Bennett, if elected as a member of the Board of Selectmen, will not again resign as he did in 1935 and accept a job as foreman on the PWA?

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

JAMES A. FARLEY utters the final word on a vital national subject:

The people of this country are for the Roosevelt program, whatever it is.

FLORIDA

THE dictionary takes a slap in the face from the city fathers of Clearwater, as they draft a municipal liquor-licensing ordinance:

SECTION 4. Licenses shall be issued only to persons of good moral turpitude.

IDAHO

RESULTS of the Higher Education upon students at the University of Idaho, as set forth in a campus hand-bill:

SCUM!

To You — Illegitimate Youngsters
Comprising The Heinous Class
of 1941:

*Cast your puss-oozing orbs on this,
our edict, and obey its contents as well*

as your leprous bodies and maggot-eaten brains will permit.

You, the stinking members of the filth-ridden class of 1941, will from this day forward:

1. Remove your infectious frames from any and all sidewalks when any member of THE SOPHOMORE CLASS appears.
2. Address your superiors, THE SOPHOMORES, as Sir and Madame, if at any time they consent to tolerate your nauseating presence.
3. You are to purchase and wear from this day forward green dinks atop your festered heads.
4. From now on nicotine shall pass beneath your hairlips only from a corncob pipe, and your only drink the swill of hogwash.
5. No cords shall drape your vile, cancerous carcass, this privilege being reserved for your superiors, THE SOPHOMORES.
6. You shall cast your slimy bellies on the ground and grovel at the feet of any member of the fair sex of THE SOPHOMORE class should she have the misfortune to suffer your foul presence.
7. And lastly, skunks, let your anemic bodies forever serve your masters and superiors, THE SOPHOMORES, until your pimply, yellow, illiterate, imbecilic, stinking forms cease polluting this heretofore fair campus.

THE MOST HONORABLE AND ILLUSTRIOUS CLASS OF 1940

ILLINOIS

THE Uplift invades the Windy City's twilight zone, according to the always reliable Chicago *Tribune*:

Gambling houses, disorderly houses, and similar places are being visited by

150 federal agents who have been assigned to collect the Social Security tax.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

CATHOLIC taste is shown by an advertiser-subscriber in the Swapper's Column of *Yankee* magazine:

Two and a half rolls Colonial pattern wall paper, the nuts for any small New England room. Will take musical toilet paper holder or couple of old New England books. Au — 114

NEW JERSEY

STYLE note, evidently written by the Grim Reaper himself, for the pages of the *Kearnygram*, published by the Western Electric Company at Kearny:

All the best and smartest people are said to be equipping their motor cars and vacation bungalows with the very last word in first aid kits, thereby preparing themselves for the accident contingencies of seashore and mountain holidays.

And those clever, clever manufacturers! Their first aid kits are almost too utterly ingenious for words! Among those seen at the informal first aid kit style shows in 34B and 170-3 was one packed in a stunning japanned lacquer box, complete with instructions on what to do before the doctor arrives.

There is a whole yard of the sheerest gauze imaginable, half an ounce of the fluffiest and softest absorbent cotton, thirty yards of very serviceable bandage, a handsome roll of adhesive tape and two adhesive bandages in the new, smart suntan shade. There is . . . a tricky little pair of scissors, a

half-ounce bottle of pastel-tinted mercurochrome, and a cunning container filled with revivifying aromatic spirits of ammonia. A dozen ingeniously-fashioned applicators complete the stunning ensemble of first aid equipment.

Style experts assert this array of indispensable materials will be widely utilized this season, and no one really *au fait* with the current mode can afford to neglect participating in this authentic trend toward personal security and safety insurance.

SOUTH CAROLINA

A REPENTANT burgher of Conway takes the public into his confidence, according to an advertisement in the *Horry Herald*:

NOTICE

I am back on my feet again, and with the good care taken of me at the Conway Hospital, and having two good doctors, Dr. Paul Sasser and Dr. J. K. Stalvey, I am about to recover from a bad drunk.

I want to notify my friends and creditors: Those I haven't paid I will pay, for if I die you get it, and if I live you get it.

DICK BRUTON

IN OTHER NEW UTOPIAS AUSTRALIA

A TALENTED citizen of Adelaide runs afoul the law, according to the *Advertiser*:

Ability to make a noise like a horse resulted in Henry Crafter, of First Avenue, St. Peters, appearing before Messrs. M. J. Daly and J. C. Munchenburg in the Campbelltown Magistrates' Court yesterday charged with having been guilty of disorderly be-

havior. He was fined 10/, with 10/ costs.

Constable Halloran, who prosecuted, said that he heard Crafter, who was traveling along Gorge Road. The noise was lifelike enough to trick him into thinking it was a horse.

Crafter said he was drunk at the time.

CHINA

THE learned Associated Press gravely describes a new wonder on the Eastern Front:

Reports of a miracle foretelling a Chinese victory ran through Nantao, a Chinese quarter of Shanghai, tonight. The report was that the Nantao City god, a huge wooden image, appeared in the street, went to the Chapei area to comfort Chinese troops, then returned to his place in the Nantao temple.

Many Chinese rushed into the temple and found the god in its usual place. They declared, however, that there was evidence of his departure and return.

ITALY

THE artist-legislator of *Il Duce's* Congress, Senator F. T. Marinetti, speaks the last word on an important world topic:

We Futurist poets and artists have recognized for twenty-seven years that war is the only world hygiene. War is beautiful because it creates new architectures, as the heavy tank. It creates the flying geometries of the aeroplane, the spiral smoke of burning villages. War is beautiful because it completes the beauty of a flowery meadow with the passionate orchids of machine-gun fire.

THE STATE OF THE UNION

BY ALBERT JAY NOCK

A New Dose of British Propaganda

I HAVE to report this month that the Union would be in a much more presentable state just now if it were not so infested and itchy with foreign propagandists, especially those of the British persuasion. The self-respecting American is down on all propagandists, as the self-respecting housewife is down on all vermin. The housewife, however, knows that Nature has given some kinds of vermin the means of becoming more objectionable than other kinds, and she acts accordingly. She is more energetic towards bedbugs, for instance, than she is towards toads in her garden, or even now and then a garter-snake. For like reasons, while the British propagandist is no more or less verminous than any other, self-respecting Americans should know that Nature has equipped him with the means of making his press-agentry more virulent, and thereby getting bigger and better results.

A considerable number of these gentry are in this country now; the newspapers show traces of

them branching out in many directions. This was to be expected. For many years I have employed a very simple method of observation which has always turned out so informative that I recommend it to my readers. Whenever there is any prospect that international affairs anywhere in the world may take a turn unfavorable to some major British interest, I suggest that my readers buy a copy of a New York paper every morning for a month, turn to the marine news, and study the lists of incoming passengers. I predict that they will be astonished to see the volume of infiltration by first-string British panhandlers which those lists will indicate.

One has to look sharp about spotting the situation which brings them forth, however, for otherwise they will all be here before one discovers that they are arriving. They themselves are so spry about starting that I have sometimes thought they must keep a set of luggage ready-packed to grab as soon as they have slid

down the pole. What I do is to read the marine news regularly every day, and I think it is the best way, because one can get so many useful hints about the course of foreign affairs by doing it. In any given situation, no matter how dark it may look, if the curve of distinguished British visitors remains steady, Britain is not interested; but if it suddenly rises, you can safely bet your last cent there is something doing.

These first-string press agents are for the most part highly-placed dignitaries, titled persons both of Church and State, for in England the Church is a branch of the civil service, like the Postoffice. I recall that once when things were looking uncommonly shaky around the eastern end of the Mediterranean, an archbishop, I think it was, came over. I believe it was the first time in our history that America rated anything as high as that, though I am not sure; nor do I remember which archbishop it was — England has two — but I think it was the present archbishop of Canterbury. We get lords pretty regularly, generals, deans, prime ministers, baronets, and all that sort of thing, and even once in a while a prince.

The bishops and princes are backed up by a horde of publicists,

lecturers, bankers, newspapermen, economists, roughneck litterateurs, members of Parliament, exchange professors, actors. These second-string artists have really the heavy end of the job. They do the day-to-day journeyman work. The first-string contingent confines itself mostly to making an agreeable impression on dress-parade, like mannequins at a fashion show. Mannequins are not supposed to talk much about the wares they are showing, although if reporters and leaders of society badger them into a corner, they might drop in a well-chosen word or two where it would do the most good. As a rule, however, the imperialist mannequins leave most of the talking, writing, and interview-giving to the experienced salesmen who follow in their train.

A fine workmanlike job those salesmen make of it, too. I have just been perusing a couple of little efforts, one a magazine article by Sir Arthur Willert, who seems to be headman of the second-string brigade at the moment, and the other a small volume by Sir George Paish. Slight as they are, innocuous as they appear, they are beautiful specimens of what our German friends call tendency-writings, *Tendenzschriften*. They remind one of Mark Twain's com-

ment on Professor Dowden's life of Shelley. The ocean is blue, he said, and you would swear to it, yet if you dip glassful after glassful out of it, each one is pure white; so, while every paragraph of the Shelley book is white, the whole book is blue with slander in solution. So too every paragraph of the works I refer to is white as innocence, yet in their totality they are blue with *Tendenz* in solution.

II

The foregoing may seem a little less than partial to our British cousins, and indeed if I left it at that, it would rightly seem that the partiality is all the other way. I shall proceed to show that this is not the case. The British are doing no more and no less than any other nation would do if it had certain natural advantages for the purpose, such as the British have. The fact is simply that ever since Columbus' time, all transatlantic nations alike have regarded America as a milch cow for Europe, and they still so regard it. This idea cannot be got out of their heads. They view the United States quite correctly as a very rich territory peopled by gullible and toothsome suckers. They feel that we have established a reprehensible squatter-

sovereignty over this territory, and set up a civilization which by all rights ought to be a good steady producer for Europe. Since we have managed to keep a pretty tight grip on our ill-got property, however, and have so far successfully resisted their efforts to blast us off it by violence, their next best bet is to make our gullibility work for them; in other words, to employ propaganda.

All European nations take this view of the problem. All of them do the very best they can to deal with it in this way. England is exceptional only in possessing certain natural advantages for dealing with it, which the others do not possess; and since this makes British press-agentry the most effective of all, it is obviously useful for us to know what those advantages are. Merely cursing the devilish wiliness and cunning of British overtures is not to the point, for the British are no more wily and cunning than other people; not at all. They are merely more successful, and the thing is to consider what makes them so.

First, the English have a language-monopoly; that is to say, any Englishman can make sounds to which almost any American can attach some sort of meaning; and all without any preliminary study

or practice. Hence the ranks of the first-string and second-string pan-handlers can be recruited to any extent at a moment's notice. Also the ability to hand it to us in our own language enables these janisseries to work themselves into strategic positions in short order. Think, on the other hand, of the tremendous initial hurdle which the Japanese and Chinese must get over before they can even present their case, and how few of them can do it; or, for that matter, Germans, Italians, French, Russians.

Second, the general line of hypocrisies, conventions, prejudices, catchwords, and clap-trap runs so much the same in British civilization and our own, that the English have no trouble in playing upon it in all circumstances with exactly the right kind of buncombe, or, as I believe our journalists call it, *bull*. Other peoples cannot do this, because these peculiarities are not in their nature; they do not understand them, and when they try to flatter our self-esteem their bull does not take. When Mr. Eden talks about "strengthening the ties of friendship between the two great English-speaking democracies", his voice has the right ring. A Frenchman's voice would not have the right ring because this line of bull is not his own; it is Anglo-Amer-

ican, and if he tried to handle it, we would detect the imposture. So when a Britisher breaks out into a sweat of moral indignation, we respond promptly because this line of bull is as much our specialty as his.

Third, the dominant middle-class civilization of America is at one with that of England in its inveterate snobbishness. England maintains a skeleton aristocracy whose sayings and doings are daily food for the snobbishness of her own middle class, but we have provided no such pabulum for ours; so when England occasionally opens her storehouse to us, our snobbishness gangs up on it with a pitiable and indecent voracity. Continental middle-class civilization, on the contrary, is relatively free from snobbishness; in France, for example, you have to go a long way to find a snob. You can turn up cads, crooks, coxcombs, about as often as you want them, but snobs are scarce as hens' teeth. So they are in Germany and in Continental countries generally. Hence the Continental cannot handily manage the rather elaborate technique of an appeal to American snobbishness, while the Englishman understands it so well that he can work it in his sleep.

Finally, the English have the advantage of a curious kind of degen-

erate sincerity. I suppose my readers will be astonished to hear that I believe most of their panhandlers really do not know they are panhandling. They share with practically all their countrymen a congenital incapacity for taking a realistic view of certain points of fact; and hence they are sincere with the appalling sincerity of invincible ignorance.

This sincerity gives them a great advantage over those to whom a realistic view comes naturally. Every Briton, be he baron or be he bum, comes into the world believing that the Englishman, wherever placed and in whatever circumstances, has a natural right to rule. He also believes that the Empire is the flywheel of civilization, and that if it should crack up, a ruined world would lapse back into the arms of Chaos and Old Night. Hence by corollary, all persons who contest the Englishman's right to rule, or who make attempts against the Empire's welfare, are fiends from Hell, such as the Boers were in the 'Nineties, the Germans in 1914, and as the Japa-

nese are now. Hence by corollary again, any measures which can be taken against such persons, even the basest and most flagitious—such as starving German civilians, bombing Indian villages, or dynamiting Arab dwellings in the Holy Land—are righteous and laudable.

Incredible as it seems, this creed is nothing that has been drilled into the Englishman, Nazi-fashion; he is *born* believing it. He takes these matters as part of the immutable order of Nature, and therein lies the strange outlandish sincerity with which he expounds them. On the other hand, no Continental European was ever born believing in any such fustian about himself. Whatever pretense he may put up on occasion is manifestly bogus, and peters out under pressure.

These four reasons are, in my opinion, the chief ones why British propaganda has such success with us as it unquestionably does have; and now that this propaganda appears to be rapidly warming up once more, my readers may find it useful to consider them.





POETRY

CHILD ON THE BEACH

BY SARA HENDERSON HAY

HERE at the edge of foam I watch him stand,
This child made pygmy by the sky and sea,
Clutching a pebble in his small, square hand,
His little charm against infinity.
"It is my magic stone," he says to me,
Absurd and innocent. With heart and mind
I ponder his magician's game, and he
Is suddenly the symbol of his kind,
Man, strutting childlike on a wider shore,
Facing a tide more resolutely sweeping
Beyond the moon of his brief sky's control;
As confident, as vulnerable before
A fathomless oblivion, and keeping
Tight in his hand the pebble of his soul.

INCIDENT IN THE GREEN PASTURES

BY MARGUERITE STEEDMAN

I LINED the benefits of God
All in a thankful row,
That I might number them like sheep
The scriptural shepherds know.
I counted them that rest might come
As sleep came, long ago.

THE AMERICAN MERCURY

There was the ram of bed and board,
There was the spacious ewe
That counted for the casual roof
All generations knew.
And there the little lambs of hope
Came skipping, two by two.

They leaped the wall that lies between
The pasture and the fold.
I wondered as the high, thin moon
Tangled their fleece with gold.
And multiplied their argent hoofs
Till all the flock were told.

The lambs of vision cantered by.
Pasture and byre were still.
But lo, that shape that crouches on
The silence of the hill!
No beauty where his leanness stands,
Eyes burning red, to see
The one who had not counted him
Till he had counted me. . . .

BOSTON BOY

BY WITTER BYNNER

DOORS like closed lips, windows like watching eyes,
House upon house would Beacon Hill arise —
The swan-boats gliding in the Public Gardens
Propelled infallibly by children's wardens —
And he a child of Boston and of stars
Longing for insurrections and for wars
Of any sort that might undo his vest
And give his heart its bareness and its rest.
O God, O God, O God, the boy would shrill
To his own innards against Beacon Hill
And long to toss a swan-boat, for Te Deum,

Against the swarthy Boston Athenaeum.
Come up over the State House, rebel blood,
In the great orb that rises! Light the mud!
Even in Boston there are wanton wills.
Gape, doors! Bay-windows, flutter on your sills!
What's in a father? Only another son
And another father, till the fool game's done!

TOWARD DEFEAT

BY V. JAMES CHRASTA

BYOND the fence the woodlands press
Their ever-sieging tides;
Beneath the rails, in restlessness,
The furtive brier glides.

Not one of us: the father, son,
Against encroaching odds,
But sees defeat already run
The gamut twenty rods;

Knowing that no one after us
Will curb these greater hordes;
Not one to stand, as we stand thus,
With plowshares for our swords.

Not long and after us will rise
The starweed and the dock,
Where we no longer may devise
This counter-thrust they mock.

Not long, and up the taken field,
The bolder tides will dare,
Knowing the weaker land must yield
With us no longer there.

THE LIBRARY

*On Facing the Next War*¹

BY JOHN W. THOMASON, JR.

IT is a pity that most books dealing with the military art are so dull that only the hardened professionals can endure them; and even these tough spirits chafe under the burden. Things are said of von Clausewitz, in the staff lamaseries of the world, which might well cause his illustrious shade to itch in Valhalla, where he sits strategically conversing with the Commanders of the Past. It seems to be a principle that if a book on war is readable, it is branded as unsound; and if it's sound, it isn't readable.

I do not know why this should be, for there are some war books that hold their own in any company. Translators have preserved the fluent narrative-style of Thucydides, and his Greeks and Persians and Scythians are astonishingly modern in their intrigues, their diplomacy, their trading, and their conflicting national aspirations. Xenophon, even in the for-

bidding school editions, is an excellent reporter as well as a fine soldier, and his memoirs of the Great Retreat are full of violent human incident, capably presented. Our current observers and correspondents on the several fronts could learn much from a studious examination of Caesar's commentaries on his Gallic wars: a master of concise prose, he sketches the broad outline of a campaign, or the racial characteristics of a people, in a paragraph, and he preserves in a sentence for all time the valor of an obscure decurion. Moses, no indifferent general, has left notes for transport, quartermaster, and sanitary officers that are perfectly understandable and in no sense out of date. And there is the Book of Joshua, which should be the model for all General Staffs, and contains, also, the first of the espionage stories now heavily in vogue.

In our own time, Colonel Hen-

¹ *If War Comes*, by R. Ernest Dupuy and George Fielding Eliot. \$3.00. Macmillan.

derson's life of Stonewall Jackson is biography at its best; and although a little marred, to the critical view, by the inevitable maternal complex the biographer develops towards his subject, it is an authoritative discussion of our War Between the States. The late Admiral Mahan had the gift of telling great stories greatly, and the gift, also, of driving home his lessons without undue pain. If you look around for it, War, even in its professional aspects, does not really lack a readable literature.

Nor should it. War, says Foch, is "frightful and passionate drama". It is that basic human activity which uses all of a man: his heroism — for he is capable of heroism; his baseness — for he can be incredibly mean; his hate and his fear and his envy, for such things are characteristic: and his extraordinary capacities for love and loyalty and devotion and endurance. Into the weaving go also his women, his physical stamina, and the secret aspirations of his soul. War is the ultimate form of racial self-expression, drawing all man's achievements in art and science and imagination to direct the uttermost violence of his body and his mind towards political and military objectives. Furthermore, there is, this last decade, the grow-

ing probability that war in the future will become a matter of pressing and personal interest to everybody. It is not any longer the eighteenth-century affair of paid professionals, conducting tidy little campaigns across restricted areas, with some conscience as to the burden inflicted upon the taxpayer. The people who really matter are not now permitted to purchase substitutes. Conscription laws, with teeth, have already been very generally applied, so that the affrighted world lately beheld the spectacle of the Nation in Arms, to an extent calculated to turn Napoleon sick with envy. The development next in order is the Nation at War, and that, as the fellow says, will be something! It will be the Totalitarian War, the logical expression of the Totalitarian State, and it is perhaps a mercy that the human imagination can take us no further.

These things being the ingredients, it would appear that War, more than most of our activities which become food for the narrators and the instructors, might escape what Carlisle calls the Dryasdusts. It has not done so. When men — and some of them otherwise quite intelligent — approach the subject, a diffusion attacks their thoughts, and strange fluxes afflict their pens.

They plunge into phantasy: Mr. H. G. Wells is the leading exponent of the fantastic school; he draws on Outer Space for his belligerents and his theaters of operations. The Right Honorable Winston Spencer Churchill is another, who ought, with his rich experience, to know better. There are, in lesser flights, the death-ray and gadget boys slaying from afar with devices of horrific precision and efficiency. In comparison with their test-tubes, their germ-cultures, and their poison-vats, the ancient terror that flew by night and the pestilence that wasted at noon-time seem about as dangerous as cross-bows directed against a tank.

Or they go into a spate of words — not short words, but the long-spurred expensive variety. Such have read von Clausewitz not wisely but too well. The industrious and meticulous German staff officer was a *privatdocent* miscast in uniform, a pupil of Kriesewetter's, and through him, of Immanuel Kant. Civilian readers of the *Critique of Pure Reason* will be thoroughly at home with him, and may be shocked to learn that he served in the campaign of 1806 — Jena and Auerstadt and the debacle of Prussian arms; in the Russian Campaign of 1812, the Leipzig Campaign of 1813, the Campaign

of France, and the Waterloo Campaign. Perhaps the book is his revenge upon the wholly illiterate or half-educated French fighting generals who upset his Europe about his ears. His monumental work, *On War*, is admirable and impressive as a great *denkmal* is admirable and impressive. It is to war what the researches of Dr. Einstein are to physics: that is to say, intelligible to a few, and profoundly bewildering to many. Von Clausewitz ought to be on the Index for all officers and military commentators save a rigidly selected minority, who, by reason of exceptional gifts and practical experience, are able to drink of him without falling bemused. Unfortunately, he is widely read by persons seeking to advance themselves, to impress the public, or to instruct the Combatant Services; and while an occasional bright and improving gleam of truth stems from such transmutations, the usual results are books that alarm and dismay innocent readers; and professional monographs, appreciations, and manuals which close the fog of war thicker around our devoted soldiery than the late Imperial German Army ever did.

Or they write romances; and for the romantics there should be only kindness. War, like ditch-digging,

sand-blast work, and double-entry bookkeeping, has its less attractive aspects, and it is not always good for the exquisite thing called morale that these crudenesses be too closely contemplated. It has also its magnificence, in extremes adventured and endured for something a man believes; and its moments of blood-stained glory when, as General Lee phrased it—himself touched with the gold of romance while he lived—*human virtue rises superior to human calamity*. And in war bloom the fine flowers of comradeship, between men who have shared toil and danger. In it also is the potency of assembled hosts, welded, as a sword is welded, to one intention. And the crash and the surge of martial music with its atavistic compelling, and the eyes and the lips of women, when their men go out to war. These things are the materials of romance, pitched pleasantly above the stinks and the weariness, which will intrude themselves soon enough. And if the weavers of romance cause frail men, presently coming under intolerable strains, to fancy themselves braver and stronger and more noble than they are, the romantics also serve their day and generation.

Finally, there are sensible people, writing reasonably of a known

thing, weaving no mysteries, projecting themselves no further than the evidence allows. Two such are Major Dupuy, of the United States Field Artillery, and Major Eliot, formerly of the Military Intelligence Reserve. They produce a book called *If War Comes*. In their own language, it is neither a prophecy nor a professional treatise: it is an attempt to examine and co-ordinate the lessons to be learned from the Spanish and Ethiopian campaigns, and from the progress of the military art and of scientific research in this country and abroad, with the view of determining the characteristics which may be expected of the war of the immediate future. In this they have, I think, succeeded admirably.

The authors open with a summary of the difficulties now current in Spain, brought down to late June, 1937, within the space of twenty pages. If you read it, you have the essential outline of events, and the social and economic factors which turned a family fight into an international free-for-all. No humanitarian desire to prevent bloodshed, no ardent sympathy with Communist or Fascist, have brought German and French and British cruisers to the patrol of Spanish waters, and Black-Shirt legions to die on the Guadalupe

road, and Prussian and Soviet planes to lock in combat above Madrid. The hard facts of military geography, that make Spain a factor in the strategic plans of every European power, have dictated such interests, and will continue to do so.

With this introduction, the book proceeds to a discussion of the nature and the rules of War, which, in their essence, follow today the general forms that emerged from the mists of antiquity. The techniques have changed, and changed very widely, but the principles remain the same.

The new and fearsome weapons are then examined soberly, and it appears that there are no new explosives, nor military gases, which were not used in 1918, and not likely to be any. The chapters on the air weapons are simple and explicit: air-power has its potentialities and its limitations, inseparable one from the other. As for land warfare, the Spanish and Ethiopian operations offer a basis for deductions; and the authors conclude that the assembly and supply of the conscript horde-armies of the First World War are no longer practicable in the face of an enemy air-superiority. It would be interesting, in this connection, to have at hand data from the Sino-Japa-

nese affair now in progress, since the Chinese appear to be effecting quite sizeable concentrations in spite of the Japanese bombers. These discussions, and the survey of naval warfare that follows, raise many controversial points, but they are inevitable. The demonstrable facts appear to have been sought with diligence, and the Majors are entitled to their points of view. It is refreshing to note that they base their naval-war deductions not only on the half-fought battle of Jutland, but on all the encounters of armored fleets, from Lissa in 1866 to the Falkland Islands in 1914. In war, it pays to seek the long view. Neither gas nor propaganda, kindred poisons, are neglected; and Chapter X, "What Will War Mean to the Civilian?", is particularly recommended.

The remainder of the book is devoted to estimates of the situation in which the several Powers find themselves, and the authors quite properly maintain an objective attitude. Chapter XI, "Paths of Conquest", is not only a competent geographic survey, but excellent writing. Adequate appendices set forth the existing armed forces in the world, and the locations of strategic raw materials; and each section of the book is supported by its bibliography. To sum up, it

seems to me that Majors Dupuy and Eliot have performed a public service.

One thing I would add: their work contains no chapter devoted to war casualties, and for this, such practicing pacifists as can bring themselves to examine sober facts, will doubtless pillory the authors as brutal and hard-hearted professional soldiers, callous to human suffering. But I have today a reprint from the *Military Engineer*, of an article entitled "Napoleon Versus the Automobile", by Dr. Leroy T. Patton, a professor of geology in the Texas Technological College. No soldier and no pacifist, the Doctor adduces certain

interesting figures. In the Napoleonic Wars, over a period of eighteen years and ten months, there were 684,270 battle casualties. In the year of Our Lord 1935, on the highways of this enlightened nation of ours, which seeks peace and pursues it, the National Safety Council estimates our automobile casualties at 1,317,000 men, women, and children. Death and wounds upon the battlefield are deplorable. But I have never seen a battle casualty that was as useless, as cruel, and as silly as an automobile casualty. Let not the American be terrified by the chance of war. He lives intimately with something more dangerous.



THE OPEN FORUM

CONCERNING KLEAGLE HUGO BLACK

SIR: Justice Black's apology and the comments it has provoked have been duly set forth in the press. With its usual chaste reticence — or obtuseness — the press ignores the greatest enormity of the Justice's apology, which is that it is not an apology but a defiance. He brazenly passed the buck right back, and attempted to indict his critics with the very offense with which he is charged. They were guilty, he would have it, with a "maneuver" — to quote his own words — "which fans the flames of prejudice . . . calculated to create racial and religious hatred". This is his answer to an indictment against him that his activities in the past have encouraged just such hatred against Negroes, Jews, and Catholics. Hypocrisy and impertinence could go no further.

It is worth observing that the technique of his defense is exactly that of Mr. Roosevelt's, who always takes the offensive against those who bring charges against him. It is reported that Mr. Roosevelt did not listen in on Justice Black's radio address. My guess is that he knew exactly what was coming, just as Charlie Michelson or Tommy Corcoran know what is coming when the President "fans the flames" against his critics.

One wonders what the country is coming to. Will the time arrive when the judicial mind is no longer a prerequisite for the Supreme Court bench, its opinions being ghost-written for it by some Federal Attorney General's department and its hirelings? Will it come to pass that the staged-trial propaganda technique of Russia be adapted to our uses, and our highest court used as a sounding board for the in-

culcation of the "social-justice" tenets of the New Dispensation?

In Justice Black's appointment and in his defiance of criticism and public opinion one may see plainly revealed the grinning and insolent lineaments of the Social Revolution.

KIRTON VARLEY

*San Francisco,
California.*



MIDDLE-CLASS COMRADES

SIR: Show me a man or woman who constantly uses the following phrases — "skills, trends, attitudes, objectives, new ways of thinking, concepts" — and I will show you a middle-class Comrade who

(1) Says something in a thousand polysyllables which Al Smith could say in ten pungent monosyllables, but wouldn't.

(2) Is connected, in fact or in spirit, with Teachers College, Columbia University.

(3) Hankers for a "changed social form", and preaches it at every opportunity in a very vague way.

(4) Thinks the New Deal is God's greatest gift to the American people, and Rex Tugwell, Tom Corcoran, and Benny Cohen its greatest discoveries.

(5) Is hot for the Youth Movement.

(6) Is certain that Sacco and Vanzetti were innocent.

(7) Thinks poorly of Grover Cleveland, Carter Glass, Charles A. Lindbergh, Henry Ford, and Adam Smith, and feels that George Washington was overrated.

(8) Discovered, in 1926, that Charlie Chaplin was a great artist, and in 1932, that he was a great sociologist.

(9) Knows that the Duke of Windsor would have been England's greatest king.

(10) Regularly warns Dr. Roosevelt's Tory critics to be "constructive" in their criticism, or else shut up.

(11) Always refers to the Founding Fathers with a sneer.

(12) Considers Mr. Justice McReynolds beneath contempt, and predicts for Mr. Justice Black a great future as a master of jurisprudence.

(13) Has never heard of William Graham Sumner, but knows all about the Forgotten Man.

(14) Will assure you with a chortle, if you can qualify as a Comrade by quoting Thorstein Veblen as well as Marx and Engels, that the American Constitution is the worst piece of flummery ever struck off by the hand of man.

(15) Detests John Garner and William Randolph Hearst, but believes that Senator McAdoo was For Roosevelt Before Chicago.

(16) Would like to "liquidate" the leading officials of the Department of State, and considers Cordell Hull a Bourbon.

(17) Keeps closely *en rapport* with the ideology of the Mesdames Perkins, Eleanor Roosevelt, Caroline O'Day, and Mary Van Kleeck.

(18) Knows Heywood Broun was once a baseball writer, and privately marvels at Broun's ascent to his present stratospheric altitude.

(19) Thinks John Dewey, and not Kiwanis International, coined the word "underprivileged".

(20) Is amused to learn that some Prairie-State *type*, newly matriculated at a corn-belt *lycée*, thinks that "production for use" means non-conformity with the Soil Conservation Act.

(21) Finds little distinction between Fascists and Nazis on the one hand, and Jeffersonian Democrats on the other, except that the former have the good sense to wait to practice a "closed economy".

(22) Never liked football, because "they were always changing the rules".

(23) Affects to enjoy Stravinsky, but privately gets more kick out of the overture to *Zampa*.

(24) Refuses to hold with those extremists who assert that two and two make six, and is, of course, convulsed when some Tory tentatively suggests that under certain conditions they might add up to a mere four. He is pretty sure, though, that the moderates have got hold of the golden mean, and that the sum of two and two is actually around five, and can be held close to that norm if 1926 prices are taken to equal 100 and all Social Security payments are applied to budget deficits.

(25) Found much that was stimulating in *Ulysses*, *Lady Chatterly's Lover*, *Jurgen*, and the illustrated autobiography of Frank Harris, just as he had in the *Song of Solomon*, the *Decameron*, and the *Thousand and One Nights* at an earlier age.

(26) Insists that his lettuce sandwiches be made with gluten bread, and invariably dazzles his visiting friends from Wichita by ordering *borsch* at the Russian restaurant, and addressing the grand duke who guards its portals as *Tovarisch*.

(27) Made and lost a small fortune in 1928 and 1929, staked his life insurance on the predictions of *Geheimrat* Irving Fisher in 1930 and 1931, and darned near lost his breeches in the market in 1932.

(28) Will be somewhat less pro-Roosevelt than Hugh Johnson, Father Coughlin, Doctor Townsend, or the lamented Huey before the Dow-Jones averages break 130 on the downside.

(29) Wishes to God someone would die and leave him a million dollars.

JOHN W. LAIRD

*Needham,
Massachusetts.*



THE DUKE AND DUCHESS

SIR: In the August *MERCURY*, Katharine Fullerton Gerould, bless her heart, drove home some pertinent facts in her article, "The British Fair-Play Myth". She wrote

of an Empire that (in my own words) is literally unsurpassed for snobbery, treachery, and poor sportsmanship; an Empire that harbors the bitterest hatred of everything American, and that has little, if any, remaining sense of honor and shame. The British Empire is lacking in a stabilizing sense of humor and cannot qualify as the good sport among nations while playing the cad and the welcher.

Wallis Warfield was hated by the narrow, disingenuous British merely because she was American, and no amount of British untruthfulness and denial can alibi that. The divorce question was merely a subterfuge for snubbing and insulting the United States. Is not that typical of British duplicity, poltroonery, and prejudicial lack of sportsmanship? The Britisher is before all else for the Britisher and invariably takes the recreant's advantage in accomplishing his purpose, devil take the hindmost. That is the British subject's creed, including unmitigated hatred of Americans. British gall is an overworked cover-up that fails to conceal the absence of a spirit of fair play. In the rare instances when an Englishman or a British subject does rise to the occasion and tries to be a man and a sportsman, he is hooted down and booted by his own countrymen. The traditions of the churl are represented by today's brand of English "sportsmanship" and fair play. Certainly no honor equivalent to that of being an American citizen can be conferred by English royalty upon a free-born American by vesting him with a title. We owe much to the English from whom we have borrowed a wealth of culture, but they have much to learn about the spirit and practice of fair play.

I sincerely like *THE AMERICAN MERCURY* and its policy, and I hope to see it retain its pungent, courageous, refreshing, stimulating, independent, enjoyable American character.

P. G. INGRAM, JR.

*Chicago,
Illinois.*

SIR: It seems to me that Mrs. Katharine Fullerton Gerould is unaware of some of the most important facts underlying the recent crisis in England. She certainly speaks with prejudice. The "behavior", as she calls it, of the British people as a whole has been magnificent — at least in the opinion of some of us. Therefore I feel impelled to put in a word of opposition to her statements.

I have lived much in England and have many English friends, and I think I may say with certainty that in spite of deep grief and disappointment, the feeling in England about the former King was one of sympathy and pity for a man who by his own act had in the end arrived at an untenable position. The British people did not "get rid" of Edward VIII. He went because he could not give up the thing he most desired for himself, even for the sake of the Empire which he had professed to love so deeply.

Mrs. Simpson as Queen of England was impossible. The King holds the proud title of "Defender Of The Faith"; he is the head of the Church of England. How could he therefore act in opposition to the tenets of that church? A minister of the Church of England cannot remarry a woman who has been divorced and whose former husband (in this case two husbands) is still living. Neither can he remarry a man who has been divorced and whose former wife is still living. In simpler words the Church holds that marriage is indissoluble. Whether one subscribes to that belief or not is immaterial. The fact remains and cannot be changed by personal desires. It is not a question of "announcing that they were going to deprive Edward of the services of an Anglican clergyman for the ceremony". The laws of the Church are rigid and her ministers conform to them or leave.

In earnest opposition to Mrs. Gerould's statements I think that English people as a whole kept their sanity, their courage, and their loyalty to the crown in a time of unprecedented anxiety and grief. It is well

to deal with facts instead of fancies. One of those facts is the value to the world of the British Empire. If England falls, civilization as we know it will fall. The importance of one man is very small. The stability of the British Empire is greatly important, not to itself alone but to the world.

KATHARINE CURTIS-BROWN

*Milwaukee,
Wisconsin.*

SIR: Mrs. Gerould's article is, I am glad to say, too pithy to be strictly accurate in all its horrible details. Insofar, however, as her indictment of us is true, please remember that our treatment of the Duke was the result of our great affection for him. You in America, who love him less, would certainly not have troubled to deplore his unhappy lot had he remained on the throne; but we would.

Mrs. Warfield would have appreciated, even less than your contributor, the incongruity of her position in a possibly too-conventional English family scheme.

It is wrong to think that we do not hold the Duke in grateful remembrance. As an Englishman bred, he is eventually certain to come back to England to brighten our hearts as he so often has in the past. This time, however, he will have taught us how little a thing this awe-inspiring Crown of England and the Commonwealth really is!

Does not this satisfy you Americans?

R. F. COOKE

*London,
England.*

SIR: Without taking sides in the controversy over the article on the abdication, may I be allowed to point out a somewhat misleading paragraph in the letter of W. P. Mackay of Canada in the October MERCURY. He says:

"The nationality of Edward's wife had nothing to do with the case: there were no aspersions on her character. Nor did her rank make any difference. But she had already been twice married and had two

living ex-husbands — that was all and that was plenty. Even Henry VIII never married a divorced woman."

Although Henry VIII never married a divorced woman, Mr. Mackay forgets the case of one of his predecessors. Henry II did marry a divorced woman and make her his queen — Eleanor of Aquitaine, the divorced wife of the French king Louis VII. Although divorce was then very rare, she was universally accepted as Queen of England.

This may seem an ancient precedent, but we may remember that the prestige of the institution of Kingship is largely due to the fact that it is an ancient institution.

J. PRICE

*Palo Alto,
California.*



STERILIZATION

SIR: Mr. Mencken's "Utopia by Sterilization" is nothing but the New Deal reduced to absurdity. His "plan" is open to the same criticism which applies to crop restriction, and all the other schemes to change the tempo of evolution, *i.e.*, no individual or group of individuals possesses the requisite omniscience to manage and operate it. The most unexpected results invariably occur when construction actually begins on one of these blueprints of heaven. Greater and more sorrows and troubles eventually come to mankind from operation of the plan than those the planners sought to escape, albeit the ultimate results may not be apparent for a long time. Mr. Wallace probably would not have killed so many pigs had he been able to foresee the drought. So, Bonneville Dam, while making cheap (?) power, will exterminate the salmon fisheries. The SEC will eventually result in the stripping of an infinitely larger number of suckers than it was supposed to protect. The Federal Reserve System was "planned" to prevent panics. It resulted in bigger and better panics. Who can say that the rejuvenated Federal Reserve Board has

not already brought about conditions which will fruit into an all-time high in panics?

Your philosophical correspondent, Mr. Moss, the Mississippi cotton-planter, covers the subject when he questions whether the sharecropper does not have sufficient happiness to balance his hardships. After all, who is able to measure the plus or minus of an individual's satisfaction with life? How abundant or how full should life be? Full of or abundant in what? What is the index number for abundance or fullness?

E. C. WATSON

*St. Petersburg,
Florida.*

SIR: In developing Mr. Mencken's plan for sterilizing the unfit, via THE OPEN FORUM or otherwise, let us hope the movement will not prove to be selfish or niggardly in scope. The possibilities of the thing challenge the imagination. Why confine its blessings to the sharecroppers of the South, or the hopeless misfits of other one-crop regions? In fact, why should we even start this civilizing boon among such classes?

Let the primary line of our offensive-defensive action be drawn against the elements of *linea americana* which constitute the greatest threat to the worth of future generations. As the first candidates for the surgeon's beneficence, therefore, I nominate the politicians. On the basis of Mr. Nock's oft-stated and irrefutable thesis that politicians — of whatever race, party or creed — comprise a class of professional criminals whose sole purpose in life is (and of necessity must be) to rape the public, this would appear to be the ideal class for early demonstration. In the course of a few generations, we could at least remove the hereditary taint. Provision must be made, of course, that any person who announces intention of candidacy for office, or who accepts a stipend from any governmental agency in any form (includ-

ing females, dolers, and other mendicants), shall be sterilized within forty-eight hours.

At \$1000 per throw, the rush for the scalpel on the part of the smaller fry of politicians and their henchmen would be, undoubtedly, fully as terrific as that of any other category. The ante could be raised for the more gaudy specimens that have been tossing the billions about with so much nonchalance; but for these worthies, the cost would be cheap at any price. Nor would there be so much opposition, in working on the politicians, from Reformers, Uplifters, and Do-Gooders. Even the most starry-eyed among them have subscribed to the tenet that all habitual criminals should be castrated.

Further elaboration of my suggestion is too obvious for exposition. One need only contemplate the fecundity of the Roosevelt tribe, or the current issue of the La Follette clan, for horrible examples.

J. E. FULLER

*Minneapolis,
Minnesota.*

SIR: It is not easy, at first, to see through the real intent and purpose of "Utopia by Sterilization", but there are some of us not so easily fooled. The very people you would have us sterilize, those in the "lower I-Q bracket", are the staunch New Dealers in the country today. Moreover, their numerous progeny are being brought up to be true red-blooded Americans, to be proud of their country's glorious history (especially the past six years), to be steadfast in their demands for the More Abundant Life, and to vote the straight Democratic ticket. Indemnifying in cash the victims of your scheme is merely another dirty Republican method of buying votes.

I think it only fair to tell you I have sent a copy of your article, along with this letter, to Mr. Farley in the hope he will take such action as may be necessary to curb the publication of similar propaganda. I am also sending him a plan I have drawn

up whereby every large family in the loyal, solid Democratic communities be paid a small but steady bonus. The amount of this bonus will be proportionate to the number of offspring, and inversely proportionate to the average I-Q rating of the parents, this rating to be determined by a board composed of three PWA workers and the County Clerk, if he is a New Dealer, or, in the event he is not, of three PWA workers, and one WPA worker. By the terms of this plan, all persons with names ending in *sky* or *ski* will receive double the amount.

If the above plan is accepted, it will do much, I feel, to compensate for Capitalistic propaganda. Also, it will serve to tie the loose ends within the structure of the Party, and sew things up in general.

ANONYMOUS

*San Diego,
California.*



THE ILLITERATE EAST

SIR: That very useful and impartial volume of statistics, the *World Almanac*, contains some interesting data on illiteracy in the United States. There are only a few cities in which illiteracy is less than one per cent. Of these, Des Moines, Iowa, is the farthest east. All the others lie west of Des Moines.

The highest ratios of illiteracy occur in Massachusetts, in Fall River and New Bedford, one with eight per cent illiterate, the other with ten per cent. Just think of that, in Massachusetts, home of dear old Hahvahd, the centah of cultuah! And the least illiteracy out in the boorish and uncivilized West! The editors of the *World Almanac* should be tarred and feathered!

W. P. GRANT

*Stephenville,
Texas.*



OPEN FORUM PERSONALS

SIR: The good clean earth from which E. J. Sheneman sprang into the pages of THE

OPEN FORUM in October with his juicy description of cremation of a human corpse certainly furnished him with an energetic imagination. I suppose the best way to sum up the whole question of cremation *vs.* interment for an appreciative fellow like Mr. Sheneman is to consider whether it is better to have great-aunt Eliza's eyeballs "bursting from the intense heat" or eaten out in slow stages by worms and bacteria.

RON KENNEDY

*Des Moines,
Iowa.*

SIR: With reference to the allegations of E. J. Sheneman in THE OPEN FORUM for October, I can only say that he is either a barefaced prevaricator or possesses a very vivid imagination. I, for my part, prefer to believe the latter. I have looked into the fenestra of crematory retorts dozens of times and have never seen anything of a startling nature. But it makes a difference whether one looks at such matters through the clear lenses of unbiased reason or through the colored glasses of prejudice.

If, on the other hand, Mr. Sheneman belongs to a religious denomination that is opposed to cremation and attacked it on that account, he is doing his church a great disservice. For all the religious bodies that have prohibited their adherents from adopting the reform have not done so because it violates any of their dogmas. On the contrary, they regard it merely as a disciplinary measure which may be rescinded at any time. Some of my friends who belong to the most powerful of the sects even go so far as to predict that the time will come when their church will build and operate crematories of its own, although they concede it will not be this year or next.

HUGO ERICHSEN, M.D.

*President Emeritus, Cremation
Association of America; Presi-
dent, Michigan Cremation As-
sociation.*

*Birmingham,
Michigan.*

SIR: I have been speculating for some days as to whether Thomas J. McCormick of Billings, Montana, is a young man, an officeholder, or a beneficiary of President Roosevelt's munificence at my expense, to explain his OPEN FORUM indignation at Mr. Nock's criticism of the President.

I voted twice for Cleveland, twice for Wilson, and once for Roosevelt. Cleveland is the only one of the three who had good sense, for he was a patriot first and a politician afterwards. In my estimation, Cleveland was the best President since Lincoln, and Roosevelt the poorest.

Wilson was an unmitigated ass and brought the country face to face with ruin and caused the upset in Europe by his damned-fool theories of race. Roosevelt is going to be worse, and it will be a wonder if this country pulls through the wreck which he already has brought and the additional hell he is raising as a smokescreen to cover his failures by diverting attention to the Chinese and Japanese troubles. The English have jockeyed Roosevelt into the leadership, just as they did Wilson.

HENRY F. GILG

*Pittsburgh,
Pennsylvania.*

SIR: The offensive letter of A Cosmopolitan appearing in the October issue of THE MERCURY moves me to make the following comment. It is unfortunate for us who believe in our country that A Cosmopolitan was spawned in any land, particularly so since he is among us unlabeled, untagged, and unnumbered. But alas, we have the polecat and buzzard to confound us and they are a forlorn pair. Since water seeks its own level, we presume that A Cosmopolitan has been accepted and initiated into their unsavory brotherhood.

J. R. KELLEY

*Dallas,
Texas.*

SIR: I have read Thomas J. McCormick's letter in the October issue in which he states

he and his friends will discontinue reading your magazine. I wish you would tell Mr. McCormick that half of the New Dealers cannot read, write, or spell, and none of them is able to understand what they read.

Also please tell him that for every New Dealer who quits reading THE AMERICAN MERCURY, two honest people start.

I'll also bet Mr. McCormick two bits to a lead slug that either he or some member of his family is at the public teat.

R. L. TIMMER

*San Antonio,
Texas.*

SIR: Having read Katharine Fullerton Gerould's article, "The British Fair-Play Myth", I have no more to say than I accept it as a personal opinion to which, as far as I am concerned, she has every right to hold, and if THE MERCURY chooses to publish it, that is THE MERCURY's own affair. But ye gods! Why Christine Week's wee small small squeak from Suburbia in THE OPEN FORUM? One wonders if Christine has ever been outside Garden City, and if so, to what purpose.

G. C. KELLY

*Winnipeg,
Canada.*



DAT OLE DEBBIL SEX

SIR: THE MERCURY articles are splendid. I enjoy them ever so much. I wonder if it will do any good for me to protest about the stories, which I consider indecent and only fit for perverts and degenerates to read. No, they shouldn't read them either.

If it is impossible to find stories worth reading (and most modern fiction does seem to be either silly or nasty) can't we have the magazine without any? — or perhaps reprints from great authors of the past? That is why I let my subscription to THE MERCURY lapse — I liked the articles but hated the stories.

Then I accepted your special offer and find in the September issue the worst of

any. As to the *Postman Always Rings Twice*, it was abominable. A book to be burned.

LOLA C. WHITE

*Leona Valley,
California.*

SIR: Your purpose to print literature of the unusual has been defeated in Thomas Wolfe's story "April, Late April" in the September *AMERICAN MERCURY*. Dramatization of such events can be seen at any time in any stockman's breeding-pen.

NELL DOHERTY

*Las Vegas,
New Mexico.*



FASCISM vs. COMMUNISM

SIR: It was with great regret that I read some of the statements in your recent editorial entitled "What Is a Fascist?" and I take the liberty of pointing out a few of your errors.

You insist that there is no practical difference between Fascism and Communism as they affect the lives, liberties, and fortunes of ordinary citizens, yet you surely know that Communism teaches the confiscation of private property whereas Fascism merely calls for its regulation. Also, Communism fosters atheism while Fascism does not. The widely-publicized newspaper hullabaloo about the religious controversy in Germany avoids mention of the fact that the Catholic and Lutheran churches there receive government financial support and hence should accept official control.

You claim that the final effect of both Fascism and Communism upon the condition of the citizenry is precisely the same. Do you claim that the people in Italy and Germany have suffered as much misery under their totalitarian governments as the people of Russia under theirs? I am not referring to any "persecutions", but to the general condition of the bulk of the populace.

If your argument is correct that there

is no practical difference between the Republican and Democratic Parties nor between the Fascist and Communist Parties, it seems a logical conclusion that a successful Fascist or Communist Party here would not differ greatly from our present principal political bodies. You must remember that the political institutions of every nation partake of the spirit and nature of its people. Although I am no defender of the Communists, I do not believe that even their victory here, disastrous though it would be, would put us on an exact level with Russia, after the first violent convulsions were over.

WILLIAM L. BUCK

New York City.



MR. NOCK'S FAN MAIL

SIR: In fairness and honesty I feel impelled to begin my communication with the time-honored device of approving before dissenting. I enjoy reading *THE MERCURY* chiefly because of the brilliant articles on subjects either eschewed or ignored by other periodicals; also because I think the reviews in *THE LIBRARY* by Mr. Thomason to be among the best to be found anywhere. Your criticisms of the New Deal — or such criticisms as have been made in articles appearing in your magazine — have had the salutary effect of tempering my own enthusiasms to something more approaching rational appraisals. In the main I still find myself in disagreement with those criticisms on the grounds that the majority of them reek with prejudice and bad economics. I am not so stupid as to assert that the supporters or policies of the New Deal are not frequently guilty of the same charge. But it ought to be apparent to every thinking and truly patriotic person that the solution of our social problems is not to be achieved by the calling of names or by the pointing of fingers. By all means let us have criticism — but let's make our criticism reasonable and fair, and let it be made in a manner consistent with

the obvious reality that society is dynamic and not static. All that our fathers did socially or politically is not necessarily good for us now, any more than their religion is.

But to get to my immediate grievance and the reason for this letter. The article by Albert Jay Nock captioned "Autopsy on the New Deal" is a journalistic endeavor that discredits THE MERCURY. What's he trying to do? Acquire a literary style that can be described only as an odious hybrid of Gen. Hugh Johnson's and H. L. Mencken's? Or is he trying to make the AMERICANA section of THE MERCURY? Not only in form but more patently as to subject matter, the whole article reads like a novice's effort rather than the product of one who has long been an esteemed member of the Fourth Estate. Senility, of course, must take its toll, and eventually there must be obituaries and mourning. But why should THE MERCURY be the undertaker and its readers the pallbearers? Certain it is that Mr. Nock cannot accuse THE MERCURY of lacking "the spirit of altruism" which he laments the New Deal has all but destroyed, since it is only on the basis of altruism that the appearance of such stuff as Mr. Nock's in THE MERCURY can be explained.

I stated that your criticisms of the New Deal have had a salutary effect on me; and by the same token, even if you don't print this, the reading of it by Mr. Nock may have a salutary effect on him.

PAUL NELSON

*Los Angeles,
California.*

SIR: Mr. Albert Jay Nock is a pleasing writer when he confines his writing to travel stories, but when he places himself in the position of an absolute judge of his superiors falsely, with bitterness and scant knowledge, then he becomes a demagogue and a nuisance. Is it not true that the aim of most magazines is to enlighten its readers on current topics? But there should be something constructive.

Would it not be well for Mr. Nock to

read Bobby Burns' stanza, commencing:
"Oh, would the power the Giftie gie us
To see ourselves as others see us"?

W. A. WARNER

*Bozeman,
Montana.*

SIR: I shall preface my remarks by saying that I am inexorably — yea, violently — opposed to much of the New Deal. In fact, I'm nonplused, flabbergasted, and plain disgusted by some of its machinations. But I am even more disgusted with Mr. Albert Jay Nock's "Autopsy on the New Deal" and his other pieces. No doubt, the typesetter blushes as he defers to his finer sensibilities by refraining from inserting a K just ahead of the N in Mr. Nock's name.

Your contributing editor's pieces exude hypocrisy. They fairly drip insincerity. In your otherwise sometimes estimable publication, Prof. Nock's comments are just so many blank pages to this customer. The New Deal can be attacked and corrected from other angles than nock-knock-nock-knock. Also, other angles will be more effective and constructive.

N. W. TURBYFILL

*Columbia,
South Carolina.*

62

STRIP-TEASE FOR FDR

SIR: The New Dealers have often asked that any criticism should be "constructive", and Laurence Bell's article in the September MERCURY, "Strip-Tease as a National Art", is the real thing. It is strange and sad that so few Presidents have left any record in the popular history and folklore of the United States.

Washington's Cherry Tree is familiar to every student, and Theodore Roosevelt's bear-hunting escapades placed the Teddy Bear in nearly every cradle in the land. These two instances are the only ones in which Presidents seem to have made any lasting impression.

This strip-tease suggestion offers F.D.R. an equal opportunity. Even the title for the act is a natural. If he will fill the WPA theaters with strip-tease dancers, billed as "Franklin's Nude Eels", they may assist materially in getting our country all Harry Hop-kised up, and be immortalized in history with George's Cherry Tree and Theodore's Teddy Bear.

B. N. WARD

*Silver City,
New Mexico.*



WHY THE SOUTH HATES PEVERAL PEAKE

SIR: I read with much astonishment in the August issue, Mr. Peake's article, "Why the South Hates Sherman", and was very much shocked at his false statements. His attack on the South seems to me to be the result of a vindictive and sadly ignorant mind. Anyone not knowing the South and reading his article would conclude this part of the country to be steeped in ignorance, and forever whining over the Civil War, which has long ago faded into the past, and is seldom if ever mentioned.

I credit this attack on the South possibly to the popular novel *Gone With the Wind*, but let me remind Mr. Peake that this book was written by a Southern woman, and is the most widely-read book in the world, being translated into several different languages. It is also a fact that Northern publishers came to the South seeking just such a book, and lost no time in putting it on the market.

Mr. Peake is evidently ignorant of the fact that Tulane University of New Orleans has the finest school on tropical medicine and that Matas, also of New Orleans, was entertained at the Court of St. James on account of his constructive contributions to surgery, and that Doctor Bass, another son of New Orleans, gave the cure of malaria fever to the world. The late E. H. Farrar of New Orleans was president of the American Bar Association, and Chief

Justice Edward White of the United States Supreme Court was a Louisiana man, a boy during the Civil War who received his legal education in the South. The great actor Sothern is a New Orleans man, and Adelina Patti, famous over the world for her voice, was another New Orleans celebrity. The South can also claim Grace Moore, who is from the mountains of Tennessee.

Before closing, I must mention that Robert E. Lee is the American General who is classed with Julius Caesar and Napoleon as the three greatest generals in history, and it is to the battlefields of Gettysburg that the West Point cadets are taken to enact and study Lee's tactics, and benefit by his unsurpassed military genius.

The South needs no defense, as her sons and daughters form as loyal a part of the Union as can be found in any other section of the country, and feel they are "One nation indivisible with liberty and justice for all".

CYNTHIA P. LITTLEJOHN

*New Orleans,
Louisiana.*

SIR: In your August issue, Peveral H. Peake rushed in "where angels fear to tread". He had much to say on his selected subject, "Why the South Hates Sherman". After reading the raw and oracular ridicule of this contributor—one who probably never smelled the gunpowder of desolation, or who jests at scars of levity because he never felt the wound of defeat—there is a temptation to ask him why, after seventy-two years have passed since the Surrender, he continues to hate the South, for his whole article smacks of the same antipathy as that of the crazed Abolitionists of the years before the war.

The answer to all his conclusions is a denial that Southerners hate Sherman because he marched through Georgia. Let the writer of that article—let the survivors of Abolitionists, as well as other groups of Yanks—understand that the

South hated Sherman, Hunter, Sheridan, and the whole Northern tribe because they were in the South at all. All these invaders were in the South because they hated its people. The whole war and all its devastations were the result of Yankee hatred. Did Garrison, Phillips, Gerrit Smith, John Brown, *et al.*, love the South? After the war, did the love of the Yankees bring on the sweet-scented Reconstruction that continued until the odor sickened the civilized world?

The Yankees had no constitutional or other right to be on the march through Georgia in the year 1864, or at any other time. Mr. Peake maintains that the march "was war", therefore the South should have accepted the results with charity and fraternity. Sherman and his army crossed the border of Georgia bearing arms, and other Yankees, with arms in their hands, crossed the Potomac into Virginia. They did not stop to consider what Virginians and Georgians thought of the fact that the heels of the despots were on their shores. I should like to remind your writer and all antique Abolitionists, that Virginia and Georgia were independent sovereignties. It is now and has always been a crime for an armed force to cross the borders of an American State. That was the crime of John Brown—for which he paid the penalty of death in Virginia.

Why did the Yankees cross those borders? They wished to impose or inflict their hatred on the South. Nothing but decimation of the South would satisfy the fury of the Abolitionists. Such was their hatred that some of the regiments started for the South the day that Lincoln called for volunteers. In all countries, invasions are unpardonable sins. Thus the South earned the right to hate every Yankee, living or dead, aforetime and thereafter until the end of time.

It is not too late for the South to care what a Yankee says about "Miss Lulu Belle" or "Miss Bessie Sue"—types of names invented by your author for the

lovely gentlewomen of the South of the war period. The chief complaint of Southerners was due to the fact that the Yankees sought to exalt the female ex-slave over "Miss Lulu Belle" and her sisters, but be it said for the everlasting credit of the freedwomen of the South, though black and uncultivated, they had a higher sense of "manners and 'havior" than the invaders, for these ex-servants did not take kindly to the Yankee brand of chivalry. One is apt to wonder what reactions "Miss Abigail" of Massachusetts, or "Miss Priscilla" of Vermont would have to a forced ascendancy of the "Honorahs", the "Camilles", or the "Jean Baptistes" of foreign emigrations (though all white) in the places of the debutantes in the circles of refinement.

Your contributor is further advised that down South at this time, in proportion to population and without the aid of tariffs, Southerners have as many "Big White Houses" as the Yankees have brownstones. They have as many new Gobelins, blooded horses, and Georgian silverware as are necessary to their pleasure and comfort. He is also advised that none of the above species of property that was stolen by the Yankees has been returned to them since 1864.

The South did not declare war. It was a Yankee war—conceived in hate and born in malignity. The South was invaded after it was driven out of the Union. Your author should keep this in mind if he elects to write another diatribe against the South. We hope he may be forced to surrender at the office of THE AMERICAN MERCURY.

EDWARD L. RYAN

*Richmond,
Virginia.*

SIR: According to Mr. Peake, the March Through Georgia was scarcely worse than "a Boy Scout hike", "an American Legion convention", "or as campaigns go, a very humane expedition", and he believes that Sherman won his victory "with an insolent,

villainous facility". In ridiculing the civilization of the Old South, Mr. Peake thinks the lament of its people for the culture of its noblest era is merely the perpetuation of a grandiose myth, "a Southern delusion", in which "romanticism became such a complete mental debacle that the myth-makers soon saw no need for clear honest thinking". He derides the South for refusing to rebuild its civilization along the lines "of industrialism or even self-supporting small farms", which he says were rejected because they were "Yankee habits", and that "the aristocratic South . . . contemptuously rejected almost all Northern ideas". This rejection, he reasons, is why the South is today so benighted and industrially backward.

As to the mildness of Sherman's March, people in Georgia still living who endured the devastation could effectively refute Mr. Peake's statement; nor would they agree with him that the siege of Atlanta, lasting from July to September, showed "villainous facility" on Sherman's part. Mr. Peake speaks glibly as one remote from the scene, as no doubt his forbears were. To many, who dwelt safely in the North, the War was only something to read about in the newspapers; they were spared its sufferings and hardships, since all the big battles save Gettysburg were fought on Southern soil.

Sherman's March took place in the fourth year of the War, when the South was almost exhausted — shut off by a rigid blockade which left it nearly bereft of supplies and munitions, and deprived of some of the necessities of life; even medicine for its soldiers had been declared contraband. During the siege of Atlanta, when the Southern army was struggling desperately to save the city and hold its much coveted railroad, old men beyond seventy years and young boys under sixteen went to the aid of General Hood, and the scarcity of arms forced them to use whatever weapons they had at hand. Opposing an army handicapped by these tremendous odds, ac-

cording to Liddell Hart, whom Mr. Peake quotes in his article, "the army which marched with Sherman was probably the finest army of military 'workmen' the modern world has seen".

In prosecuting such a death struggle, could Sherman be said to have carried out his campaign mildly? Was the devastation wrought upon such a people humane? Was it comparable, for instance, with the conduct of General Lee? As he proceeded across Maryland into Pennsylvania, before the Battle of Gettysburg in 1863, General Lee issued his famous Order 73. Here is a part of it: "The Commanding General considers that no greater disgrace can befall the Army and through it our whole people, than the perpetration of the barbarous outrages upon the unarmed and defenseless and the wanton destruction of private property that have marked the course of the enemy in our own country. Such proceedings not only degrade the perpetrators and all connected with them but are subversive of the discipline and the efficiency of the Army, and destructive of the ends of our present movement."

As to the Southern civilization, upon which Mr. Peake heaps aspersions, could it have been so poor in quality when it produced a Lee, a Jackson, a Nathan Forrest; a Sidney Lanier, a Joel Chandler Harris, a Henry Grady; an Alexander Stephens, a Jefferson Davis, a Robert Toombs; a Henry Clay, a John Calhoun, a James Madison; a John Marshall; a Thomas Jefferson; even the glorious Father of Our Country, who enriched all the country by the precious heritage he left us — George Washington?

There was also the point of industrialism which Mr. Peake thought the South should have adopted. Since what I would say has been much better said by another, I offer a non-partisan opinion from an essay by G. K. Chesterton. He says:

"The Civil War . . . was a fight to a finish, and they were a very much finer sort of people who were finished. . . . The American Civil War was a real war

between two civilizations. It will affect the whole history of the world. . . . The American politicians lost something more valuable than a war; they lost a peace. They lost a possibility of reconciliation that would not only have doubled their strength, but would have given them a far better balance of ideas which would have vastly increased their ultimate influence on the world. Lincoln may have been right in thinking that he was bound to preserve the Union. But it was not the Union that was preserved. A union implies that two different things are united; and it should have been the Northern and Southern cultures that were united. As a fact, it was the Southern culture that was destroyed. And it was the Northern that was ultimately imposed, not a unity but merely a uniformity. But that was not Lincoln's fault. He died before it happened; and it happened because he died. . . ."

These are some of the answers which the writer, a Georgian, would offer in refutation of the statements of Mr. Peake, urging that he and those similarly-minded lay aside all vilification and hate in favor of constructive ideas.

CECILE WILLINK

*Washington,
D. C.*



THE DOUBLE STANDARD

SIR: For years I have looked longingly at THE MERCURY on the newsstands and passed it up because I felt that it was a luxury I couldn't afford, especially since the Depression has made magazines a thing we can do without. However, your April number was given to me a few days ago and after reading "I Believe in the Double Standard", I conclude that perhaps I haven't missed much after all. I not only read the article but went to the library and read the comments on it in THE FORUM. Perhaps I am a little late in my say, but at least I will have the satisfaction of getting it off my chest.

I would like to state that I am by no means a young woman, for when I have had another birthday, I shall have rounded out my three-score and ten, though I could easily pass for sixty. I married young. I have had three husbands. All of them are dead. So perhaps I can without undue vanity claim that I have had "what it takes to get them" and also "what it takes to keep them", for I have had offers of marriage quite recently from men who are ten years younger. Maybe it is due to the fact that I have never had to lie awake nights wondering who my husband is, as one woman puts it, "bedding up with".

I am confident that not one of the three ever thought of stepping out on me. But if one of them ever had and it had come to my ears, he would have lost his happy home so quick he wouldn't have known how it happened. My first husband was a very handsome young fellow who had had his fling before we were married and made no secret of it. But very soon after we were married he made this remark, "Well, thank God, those illicit love affairs are over!" So he must have felt that the loss of such freedom was not a thing to be regretted.

I quote from "A Wife's" article: "To a man stripped of the sentiment in which the family as a social unit has seen fit to envelop him, home is purely a place in which to feed and breed." In my opinion, such a man belongs to that species of animal whose habitat is the pasture, and any woman who can accept his left-over caresses, even though they are spiced with "surprises and diversions" gained from his liaisons with the plump blonde with the obvious permanent or the young lady who does his filing by day and surrenders herself to him at night in return for a piece of flashy jewelry or a fur coat, is sadly lacking in all the finer instincts that women are supposed to possess.

How is "A Wife" going to keep her husband entertained, say twenty-five or thirty years from now, when those "boisterous spermatozoa" begin clamoring for re-

lease, when the only way he can spend his evenings is in his arm chair with his plush slippers on, smoking a smelly pipe and living in memory the nights of gladness? Will she feel repaid for cooking his meals and bearing and raising his children? Will she still take the same pride in having been the queen of his harem, even to the day when the "plump blonde" and the "nice" office girl wouldn't give him a second look?

The very fact that she could write such an article presupposes a lofty disdain for the scriptural command, "Thou shalt not commit adultery". So there is no use trying to argue with her from a moral standpoint. The only time she will be sure of her husband is when he is too old to do more than look upon a woman to lust after her, as he sits in the sun, smoking his pipe and snarling at everything and everybody, God help her.

Don't tell me this is a vulgar letter. Don't I know it? But it isn't one whit worse than the one you published to be read by older people who are disgusted and what is worse by young people who are curious and wondering. If I had any young people in my home now, I would burn it before they had a chance to read it. And that's that.

THRICE MARRIED

*Long Beach,
California.*



THE UNLIKED CHILDREN

SIR: I have been away for several months and have not seen a copy of THE MERCURY since the issue which carried the article, "I Do Not Like My Children". Isn't it queer the way something will stay with you even after just one rather casual reading? All Summer that thing has come back to me from time to time—partly because I have heard it frequently discussed, partly because I read a rehash of it in a Cleveland paper, but mostly because, being the mother of two hellions myself,

I'm interested in getting other people's slant on this business of raising children, and for what?

Nobody has asked my opinion—I'm one of those women who talk so much no one gives me credit for any actual thinking—but I'm sure I'll sleep better if I make this suggestion. Would it be possible to contact one of the four children of the woman who so frankly says she doesn't care for her offspring and get an equally frank statement of just how much the kids like her? I have a strong notion that such a juvenile exposé of "Life With a Thwarted Career-Mother" would make quite as interesting reading as the article which the lady herself contributed to your pages. And I wouldn't be at all surprised if the psychology was a lot better.

I take no stand in regard to the matter—but I'll bet your letter department has been swamped with communications from virtuous mothers to whom hanging would be too mild a medicine for the author of the article in question. I never had a career, outside of my own kitchen and nursery, so I can't honestly put myself in this frustrated genius' place and figure out what my reactions would be under the circumstances she describes. I can only take her word for it that she feels as she says she does. I also can feel no great astonishment that the children have no perceptible attachment for the parental fireside, once away from it.

MARGERY B. YOCHAM

*Tiffin,
Ohio.*

SIR: I am a mother. I have four children and I like them because they are mine. I wanted each one of them. I planned for each one of them. I am still planning for them.

I am a busy woman. I have enough to keep me busy even if I had no children; I am interested in my husband's work. There are a dozen or more different things I should like to do; but I am a mother,

and my children come first. I care for them myself, and care for our home without outside assistance.

My husband has a modest income. We have sometimes remarked how much we could have for ourselves—just the two of us—if we had no family. We could be very comfortable and practically free from worry. But what a life that would be! How empty and void! And what selfish lives we two would live, just we two growing old without anything to look forward to.

I have to dress carefully, and recently I have had to make my own clothes. My husband's suits have to be made to last twice as long as ordinarily—because we love our children, and what we have must be shared with them. We like nice things, we enjoy comfort, but even though it means hardship, we want our family.

I have done my best in rearing our family. They are hearty and wholesome, thoroughly alive and active, with mostly sensible desires and tastes. They are not perfect. They are fussy when things go wrong. The neighbors think they are rather too loud. They want things they can't have and have tantrums when they are not pleased. They usually try to be nice and good—but they are not perfect. They are my children, however, and I like them.

They are and will be to a great extent what I have made and will make them. They reflect me, they reflect their father, their

training, their home. Of course, the worse traits they inherit from their father, and the better ones from me. But we are a happy family. When they are all at school and we are left alone for a time, it gives us a little rest; but we are always thinking of them—looking forward to the hour when they will be home again. We do not plan our lives without them. Life is complete only when they are all with us. We have no selfish pursuits we wish to carry on without them. And when the time comes for them to marry and found homes of their own, we still want to be a part of them. We want to have their children around.

We never want to be alone—we are a happy family—they are our children and we like them—we *love* them.

LORRAINE KNIGHT

*Pasadena,
California.*

SIR: How could any mother write such an article as "I Do Not Like My Children", and how could a publisher accept it? And what would be the effect on the minds of some to even think a mother could feel that way?

Mother is the name of God in the minds of little children. May it always be so.

A MOTHER

*Brielle,
New Jersey.*



INDEX TO VOLUME XLII

- Americana 103, 226, 355, 479
 Anonymous: How I Became a
 Fascist 147
 Paul R. Grabiell: Hero or Hack? 439
- Beal, Fred E.: I Was a Communist
 Martyr 32
- Bell, Laurence: Strip-Tease as a Na-
 tional Art 56
- Boyd, Ernest: The United Affront 275
- Brown, J. L.: The Crime of Being a
 Witness 284
- Bynner, Witter: Epitaph for a Con-
 stant Lover 53
 Boston Boy 488
- Campbell, Kenneth: The Old-Time
 Religion 427
- Carroll, Gordon: Dr. Roosevelt's
 Propaganda Trust I
 How the WPA Buys Votes 194
 Propaganda From the White
 House 319
- Chaffee, Eleanor A.: Old Man . . . 69
- Chalker, Paul: Hang-Over 466
- Chamberlin, William Henry: Rus-
 sia's Goldbrick Constitution . . 181
- Check List vi, iv, vi, viii
- Chrasta, V. James: Toward Defeat . 489
- Coghlan, Ralph: Missouri Uplift:
 A Case History 139
- Contributors xiii, xiii, xxvi, xxvi
- Dennis, Lawrence: Liberalism
 Commits Suicide 157
- Devoc, Alan: The Snake 82
 Our Enemy, the Cat 448
- Editorials 98, 220, 349, 475
- Editors: Farley for President! . . . 257
 Further Notes on the Act 390
- Ex-Farmer: To Hell With Farming 313
- Fante, John: The Road to Hell . . . 214
- Hall, Eileen: Autumnal 180
- Hay, Sara Henderson: Child on the
 Beach 467
- Jackson, Marjorie W.: Sonnet . . . 348
- Kolodin, Irving: Recorded Music
 xiv, xiv, xviii, xviii
- Lewis, Hobart: Tiger — Siss-Boom-
 Ah! 337
- Lutes, Della T.: Fat of the Land . . 70
- Madeleva, Sister M.: October Birth-
 day 156
- Masters, Edgar Lee: End of August 54
- Mathews, Jackson: Deeper Than
 Atlanta 168
- McCarthy, John Russell: Matilda's
 Glasses 138
- McKee, Philip: The High Cost of
 Dying 307
- McNeill, Louise: Neurotic 64
 Midnight Song 283
- Mencken, H. L.: Hero or Hack? . . 436
- Mills, Ogden L.: The Social-Secu-
 rity Hoax 385
- Moscow Correspondent: Ten Years
 of Soviet Terror 298
- Mullins, Helene: Lost 81
- Nock, Albert Jay: Autopsy on the
 New Deal 106
 The Packing of Hugo Black . . . 229
 The Difficulty of Thinking . . . 358
 A New Dose of British Propa-
 ganda 482
- Open Forum 117, 239, 372, 496
- Pollock, Channing: "The Workers"
 vs. The Workers 129
 Ten Forgotten Men 394
- Pratt, Fletcher: The Disarmament
 Hoax 173
- Roth, Charles B.: The Myth of the
 Two-Gun Man 151
- Russell, Oland D.: Floyd Collins in
 the Sand Cave 289
- Seaman, H. W.: Ninety-Nine-Per-
 Cent British 46
- Sears, Paul B.: Death From the Soil 440

Smirnova, Elena: The Good Life in Moscow	406	On Facing the Next War	490
Smythe, Daniel W.: City Street . . .	86	Thomen, August A.: Don't You Believe It!	76
Spalding, Eliot B.: America's Cry- Baby Athletes	65	Fallacies About Your Health . . .	187
Steedman, Marguerite: Incident in the Green Pastures	487	Varney, Harold Lord: Our "Lib- eral" Weeklies	452
Thomason, John W., Jr.: A Mav- erick on Parade	III	Whitely, Helen R.: Madame La Secretary Perkins	416
Notes on an Economic Royalist . .	234	Wistrand, Robert: For A Sorceress	336
The Art of Prophecy	364	Wolfe, Thomas: April, Late April .	87



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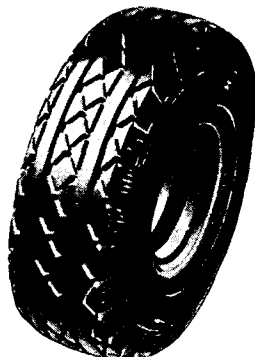
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(Continued from front adv't section, p. xii)

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★★★★★ A HISTORY OF THE ART OF WAR IN THE 16TH CENTURY, by Sir Charles Oman. \$6.00. *Dutton*. A fine scholarly book, of the sort too seldom seen. Tactics and strategy in the hundred years of the Great Wars, that began with dynastic struggles in Italy and ended with the religious wars in France. Sir Charles Oman is perhaps the first living authority in this field, and deserves to be.

★★★ DIXIE AFTER THE WAR, by Myrta Lockett Avery. \$3.00. *Houghton Mifflin*. The vintage of the grapes of wrath has soaked these pages. It is the ré-issue of an old book a Southern woman wrote, out of pride and grief and noble anger: the kind of history, says General Clement Evans, a witness gives. And note that not the least of the horrors of war is its effect upon the victors.

★★★ ORDEAL IN ENGLAND, by Sir Philip Gibbs. \$3.00. *Doubleday, Doran*. Sir Philip was once celebrated as the "world's greatest reporter". Of recent years, the philosophic mood has seized him, and in this new volume of essays he examines Britain and the British with a sociologist's eye. The conclusion is more or less academic: that the Empire will muddle through, at least once more.

(Continued on page xxii)

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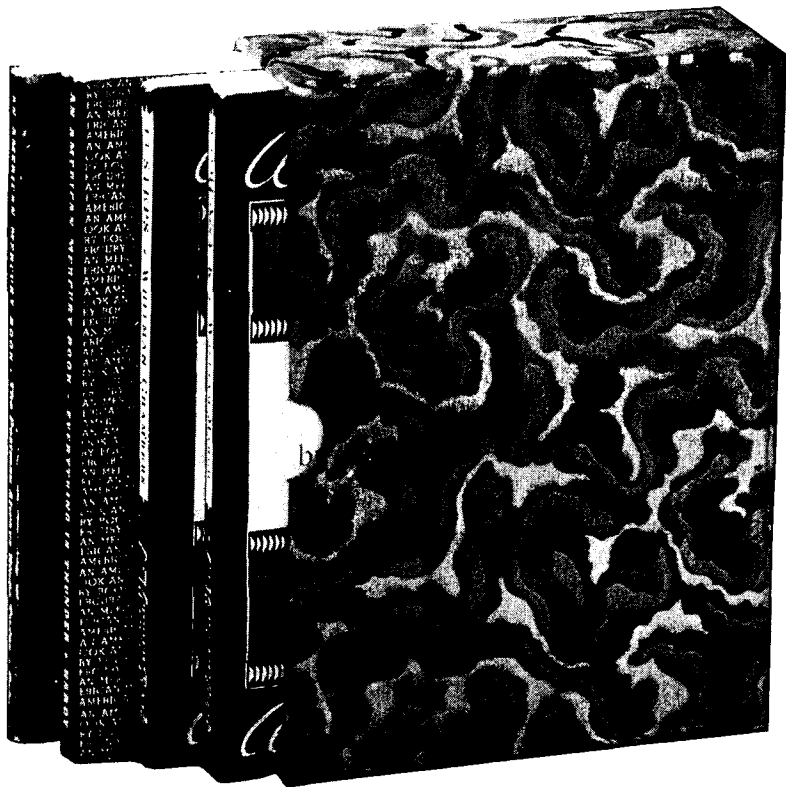
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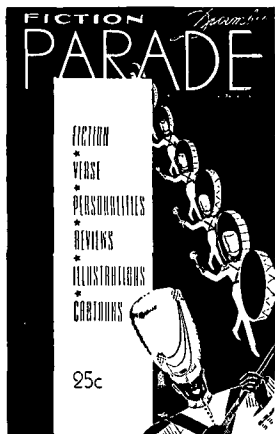
★★★ PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT IN CHILDREN, by Ernest J. Chave. \$2.50. *University of Chicago Press*. The author writes capably on an under-emphasized and intricate subject. An excellent bibliography accompanies each chapter.

★★★ ALIENS IN THE FAR EAST, by Harry Emerson Wildes. \$3.00. *University of Pennsylvania Press*. A plausible, pliable study of the Mikado's people, including the past, the present, and some of the future: and as such, of help to current debates on the War in Asia. The author strives to weigh both sides of a question, thereby enhancing his value as a social philosopher.

★★★ COLONIAL POLICIES OF THE UNITED STATES, by Theodore Roosevelt. \$2.00. *Doubleday, Doran*. The former governor of Puerto Rico and governor-general of the Philippines reviews the efforts of America at making Empire, and decides the game is not worth the candle. There are also timely reflections on the causes of the present unpleasantness in the Far East.

(Continued on page xxiv)

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★★★ **ACADEMIC PROCESSION**, by James Reid Parker. \$2.00. *Harcourt, Brace*. A collection of campus vignettes, some previously published in the *New Yorker*, and all of them sprightly and charming. Genuinely Liberal colleges should place a free copy in each dormitory.

★★★ **THE CRISIS OF QUEBEC, 1914-18**, by Elizabeth H. Armstrong. \$3.00. *Columbia University Press*. Able and impartial analysis of the troubles, political and social, which plagued the Province of Quebec during the War years. There are notes on the attitude of the higher Catholic clergy, which was that the French-Canadians should take military service as a patriotic duty; and observations on the methods used by politicians to bring home this thought to their compatriots. Today, however, there is talk in Canada of a second, more serious Crisis, based on the Nationalist movement.

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★★★ **THE 1937 NEW YORKER ALBUM**. \$2.50. *Random House*. The best book of humorous drawings that money can buy, being everything that average comic art is not.

★★ **ELIAS VAIL TRAINS GUNDOGS**, by Ella B. Moffit. \$3.00. *Orange Judd*. An interesting description of the methods of a well-known trainer of gundogs. The sections on non-slip Retrievers are valuable, but the book is perhaps spoiled for the experienced reader by its preoccupation with elementals.

★★ **SOLDIERS OF DARKNESS**, by Thomas R. Gowenlock and Guy Murchie, Jr. \$2.75. *Doubleday, Doran*. Some adventures of the American Intelligence Service in France during the World War, and in Germany during the Occupation. There is

little here of codes and Madame X's: the book relates the journeyman fashion in which operatives made the most of fragmentary information, gathered from battlefields and prisoners.

★ **MEN AND TENDENCIES**, by E. I. Watkin. \$3.00. *Sheed & Ward*. Balanced essays on men of letters and science, concerning such worthies as Aldous Huxley, Galsworthy, J. B. S. Haldane, Santayana, and Karl Marx, from the pen of an eminent Catholic philosopher, whose religious outlook shapes his criticisms.

★ **HOW TO LOSE FRIENDS AND ALIENATE PEOPLE**, by Irving Tressler. \$1.49. *Stackpole*. The subtitle states that the book is a burlesque. But it does a more genial service to our aspirants than the solemn and stupid book it satirizes.

★ **DIRECTORY OF SOCIAL AGENCIES OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, 1937-1938**. Prepared Under the Direction of the Committee on Information Services of the Welfare Council. \$3.00. *Columbia University Press*. Forty-second edition of the volume which gives general and specific information relating to Manhattan's many social agencies.

★ **NEW FRONTIERS OF THE MIND**, by J. B. Rhine. \$2.50. *Farrar & Rinehart*. The author's published articles on "mind-reading", as witnessed in Duke University's brain laboratory, have already started a respectable controversy. The advent of this book, in which Professor Rhine recounts his adventures with the "sixth sense", will keep the controversy going. But the coincidental appearance of ESP test cards and score pads for amateur investigators indicates that the new "mind-reading" has commercial possibilities. Not so long ago, cross-word puzzles also revealed a high market value.

★ **THE CASE OF LEON TROTSKY**, by the Preliminary Commission of Inquiry. \$3.00. *Harpers*. Documentary findings of the Liberal cabal which recently journeyed

(Continued on page xxvi)

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THE CHECK LIST

(Continued from page xxiv)

to Mexico to hear the Master state his defense against the conspiracy charges filed by Stalin's mouthpieces. The Commission comprised Dr. John Dewey, chairman; Suzanne LaFollette, secretary; Otto Ruehle, Benjamin Stolberg, and Carleton Beals (resigned). Their report is about what one would expect. Liberals never learn.

★ **COMMON NEUROSES OF CHILDREN AND ADULTS**, by O. Spurgeon English and Gerald H. J. Pearson. \$3.50. *Norton*. A textbook for the student of psychiatry who hopes, by applying Freudian theories, to build up a prosperous practice among the junior and adult Peter Pans of this neurotic age.

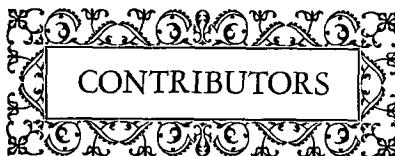
WIT AND RHETORIC IN THE RENAISSANCE, by William G. Crane. \$3.50. *Columbia University Press*. Research to show that the seeds of our modern literary forms were already sprouting in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. For those interested in such things, a valuable source-book of English.

THE BANNED BOOKS OF ENGLAND, by Alec Craig. \$2.90. *George Allen & Unwin, Ltd.* While the title is alluring, the book is wholly concerned with an analysis of the idiosyncrasies of English censorship: it appears to be very idiosyncratic indeed.

40,000,000 GUINEA PIG CHILDREN, by Rachel Lynn Palmer and Isadore M. Alpher. \$2.00. *Vanguard Press*. Another attempt to clinch the point that the population of America is being poisoned by the capitalist manufacturers of breakfast foods, candy, laxatives, etc. The trouble with such books is that the authors rarely identify their political philosophy in a foreword. Without such information, the reader accepts Left-wing propaganda as fact.

SPY OVERHEAD: THE STORY OF INDUSTRIAL ESPIONAGE, by Clinch Calkins. \$2.50. *Harcourt, Brace*. Based in the main on the juicy findings of the LaFollette Committee, this conglomeration of selected

data asserts that the Boss is always a crook, the Worker always a saint. It would be refreshing if a non-partisan writer would sometime disclose the evils on both sides of the picture and admit frankly that union brutality is just as nefarious as capitalist espionage. But Lady Comrade Calkins can't forget the Marxian dogma.



WITTER BYNNER (*Boston Boy*), poet and translator, lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico. **KENNETH CAMPBELL** (*The Old-Time Religion*) teaches English in a Mid-Western university. **PAUL CHALKER** (*Hang-Over*) was born in Georgia in 1911 and now lives in Jacksonville, Florida. "Hang-Over" is his first published story. **V. JAMES CHRASTA** (*Toward Defeat*) is a young farmer of Los Molinos, California. **ALAN DEVOE** (*Our Enemy, the Cat*), essayist and short-story writer, lives in an old farmhouse in upstate New York. His most recent book is *Phudd Hill* (*Messner*). **SARA HENDERSON HAY** (*Child on the Beach*) is a young writer of Anniston, Alabama. **H. L. MENCKEN** (*Semper Fidelis*) is the former editor of *THE AMERICAN MERCURY*. **CHANNING POLLOCK** (*Ten Forgotten Men*), well-known writer and lecturer, is a frequent contributor to these pages. **PAUL B. SEARS** (*Death From the Soil*), director of the Department of Botany at the University of Oklahoma, is the author of *Deserts on the March* (*University of Oklahoma Press*). **MARGUERITE STEEDMAN** (*Incident in the Green Pastures*) is a member of the editorial staff of the *Atlanta Journal*. **HAROLD LORD VARNEY** (*Our "Liberal" Weeklies*), an authority on the Radical movement in America, is a frequent contributor to *THE MERCURY*. **HELEN R. WHITELY** (*Madame La Secretary Perkins*) is a newspaperwoman and former Washington correspondent.

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STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACTS OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AND MARCH 3, 1933

of *The American Mercury*, published monthly at Concord, New Hampshire, for October 1st, 1937.

State of New York, County of New York, ss. Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Lawrence E. Spivak, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the General Manager of *The American Mercury* and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Act of March 3, 1933, embodied in section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business manager are: *Publisher*, The American Mercury, Inc., 570 Lexington Avenue, New York, N. Y.; *Editor*, Paul Palmer, Ridgefield, Connecticut; *Managing Editor*, Gordon Carroll, Ridgefield, Connecticut; *General Manager*, Lawrence E. Spivak, 570 Lexington Avenue, New York, N. Y.

2. That the owner is: Paul Palmer, Ridgefield, Conn.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

Lawrence E. Spivak, General Manager.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 28th day of September, 1937. J. W. Herman, Notary Public.

(My commission expires March 30, 1939.)

Recorded MUSIC

BY IRVING KOLODIN

*** indicate an outstanding performance, ** a competent performance, * an acceptable performance. ††† denote exceptional recording, †† efficient recording, † poor recording.

ORCHESTRAL

***††† Boris Godounoff, Moussorgsky (Extracts): (RCA-Victor, three 12-inch records, \$6.50). A generation ago this selection of excerpts from Moussorgsky's great music-drama would be known as a "potpourri", but the consecutive pattern maintained by the arranger (Leopold Stokowski, who also conducts) gives them the rank of a "symphonic synthesis". In any case, the three disks contain a considerable quantity of beautiful music—including orchestral versions of the coronation scene, the siege of Kazan, and the death of Boris—though equally fine performances of these excerpts, with voices and chorus, would be even more desirable. The music is read by Stokowski with great vitality, and the recording is equal to any that has yet appeared. The band is, of course, the Philadelphia.

***††† *Götterdämmerung*, Wagner (Extracts): (Columbia, two 12-inch records, \$3.25). These excerpts, which include Hagen's "Watch" (from Act I) and his greeting to the Vassals (from Act II) may more properly belong in an operatic category, but the excellence of the orchestral recording and its importance in the success of the records makes a notation justified. Made at an actual performance in Covent Garden last year (with Ludwig Weber as Hagen and Herbert Janssen as Gunther) the records have the tension and mood that are rarely present in studio reproductions. Sir Thomas Beecham conducts the ensemble, which includes the fine London Philharmonic Orchestra.

PIANO

***††† *Variations on a Theme by Paganini*, Brahms (Columbia, two 12-inch records,

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\$3.25). A stunning and well-recorded version of Brahms' finest piano work, played with comprehensive mastery by Egon Petri. The reproduction is impressively good on a machine of the proper capacity, but don't expect equivalent results on a phonograph not of modern specifications.

***†† *Córdoba* (No. 4 of *Cantos de España*), *Albéniz*: (RCA-Victor, one 10-inch record, \$1.50). This charming music is rarely favored with the artistry bestowed on it in this version by José Iturbi. In addition to his mastery of the instrument, Iturbi has, also, the feeling of this music in his blood.

VOCAL

***†† *La Donna é Mobile* (*Rigoletto*) *Verdi*, and *Recondita Armonia* (*Tosca*) *Puccini*: (RCA-Victor, one 10-inch record, \$1). Another example of the extraordinary powers of the young Swedish tenor, Jussi Björling, who is shortly to make his American debut via the radio. As well as being remarkably well sung, these excerpts have the advantage of first-rate orchestral accompaniments by Nils Grevillius.

***†† *Non ti scordar di me, de Curtis* and *Mille cherubini in coro*, *Schubert-Melichar*: (RCA-Victor, one 10-inch record, \$1.50). Two excerpts from Beniamino Gigli's latest film, remarkable only for providing additional examples of his fine voice. The de Curtis song is merely sounding sentiment, and the Schubert *Wiegenlied* is scarcely Gigli's metier. Alois Melichar conducts the accompaniments, played by the Berlin State Opera Orchestra.

DANCE

Who? and *Dipsey-Doodle* (Victor, one 10-inch record, \$.75). Something old, something new, by Tommy Dorsey and band. In this case, it's the something old which justifies a recommendation, for the *Dipsey-Doodle* is just one more "novelty" tune — lacking chiefly that. Both sides are played with equal expertness, but Dorsey's soulful tromboning on *Who?* justifies a word some-
what more spiritual than merely "expert."



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Edited by Henry Goddard Leach

Table of Contents for December

Where Jews Succeed

A Reply to Mr. Feuerlicht

LOUIS I. NEWMAN

Problem Mothers

Maternal Jealousy and Self-Pity

KATHERINE WINANT

Equal Rights for Men

Shall Women Have Their Cake and Eat It Too? **HARRY HIBSCHMAN**

Will the Upper Classes Vanish?

Survival Is a Matter of Brains, Not Beauty

STRUTHERS BURT

China Takes Her Stand

The Ultimate "Stab in the Back"

MADAME CHIANG KAI-SHEK

An Anthropologist Looks at Doctors

Why the Halo about the Medical Profession? **EARNEST A. HOOTON**

Can We Afford Children? — Paul Popenoe

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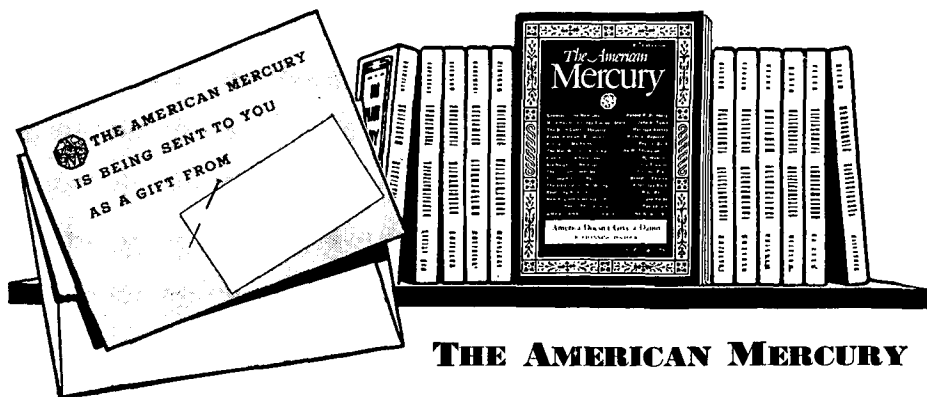
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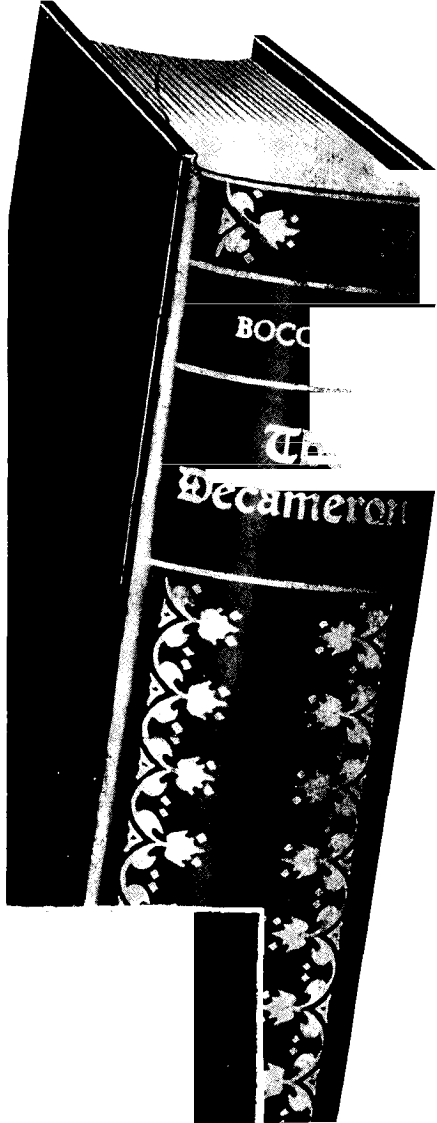
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